

THE
Garden of Love,
AND
ROYAL FLOWER
OF
FIDELITY.

A Pleasant
HISTORY.

Written Originally
By Mr. John Reynolds Author of
God's Revenge against Murder.

Now much Amplify'd by several Hands.

*The Ninth Edition, with Amendments
and Alterations.*

L O N D O N:
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Garden of Love

ROYAL FLOWER

FIDELITY

PISTOL



Adm. of

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T H E
Garden of Love,
A N D
Royal Flower of Fidelity.

IN the thrice renowned island of Cicilia, which being situated in the center of the Mediterranean Sea, is most gallantly embellish'd with the treasure of Ceres and Flores, before ever the pride of tyrannizing Spain insulted in those quarters, there sometimes reigned a virtuous and valorous king, nam'd Druyno; whose skill in martial affairs, and knowledge in industrious sciences, did no less daunt the courage of his profess'd enemies abroad, than with content satisfy the expectations of his loyal subjects at home.

Having a long time liv'd with his beautiful queen Gratiana without issue, being daughter to Polydore, king of Barbaria, had at last in his declining years, when reason would have induced men to believe that his

hoary hairs betoken'd an approaching death, a gallant son, to the no little joy of his aged father, and no less rejoicing of his loyal subjects; who in the congratulation of the nativity of their young prince, so magnificently solemniz'd his birth with such heroic triumphs, that all foreigners being spectators of their voluntary grandeur, might justly conclude them to be ravished in an extasy of contentation.

The prince being to be baptized with such magnificence as was agreeable to his royal extraction, was by his royal father and mother nam'd Thalmeno; and being nurs'd with care, and disciplined in martial exercises, he was at the age of seven years grown so great a proficient in the school of Bellona, that all the astrologers at that time did perfectly prognosticate, that his princely person would at the age of reason, undoubtedly merit to be triumphantly crown'd with the laureat garland of Olympian fame.

Beautiful he was of complexion, more exquisitely resembling Adonis than Paris: Courteous he was of demeanour; for his benignity surpassed the affability of Alexander; and exceeding discreet he was of capacity, for from his eloquent tongue dropt the enchanted phrases of admired Demosthenes. So that as nature had surpassed her skill, in framing him outwardly most excellent, art likewise had bestow'd her chiefest curiosity in embellishing his mind with the prime of ingenious industry. Pallas, if she had heard this report, would have

have prais'd his perfections: Juno, if she had view'd his person, would have forsaken her Jupiter; and the Syrens themselves, had they fix'd their eyes upon his features, would have withdrawn their melody from timorous Ulysses, and turn'd the harmony of their voices to invest only Thalmeno their favourite.

He in the bloomy spring-time of his tender juvenility demonstrated so many virtuous actions of his princely forwardness, that the king his royal father, rendered millions of thanks to the sacred Jehovah, for blessing him with so sweet a son; and his joyful Cicilians yielded devout gratulations to goddess Fortune, for affording them so gallant an heir to their flourishing empire. Which heroical young prince, being the map of modesty, the patron of piety, and the flower of magnanimity, had no sooner heard time sound the fifteenth year of his age, but fixed his mind upon renowned travel, and did upon the rock of his valorous resolutlons, so constantly determine to experiment what the event of his princely fortunes might produce, that youthful, yet majestic desires still kindling within the embers of his heroical affection, did at last so flame to the absolute fire of desperate determination, that, come life or death, Thalmeno resolved, and in resolving, vow'd to withstand the blasts of Boreas, and pass the surges of Neptune, the better to adorn storehouse of his royal fancy, with the

strange accidental sights of some foreign novelties.

But millions of doubts began to incumber his aspiring imaginations ; for first, considering, that to depart without leave were to bereave his father of his only comfort ; and to forsake Cicilia, were to withdraw his staff of consolation ; which premisses considering, he resolv'd to bury his military resolutions in the grave of oblivion : So that smothering up the submissive motives of obedience in the concave of self-will, and pricking forward his senses with the dignify'd spurs of honour, he lastly resolved, that to maugre the effects of fortune, or the treachery of time, very soon to depart.

But this his private resolution was not so secretly conceal'd, but the news thereof reach'd the ears of his cousin Palmo, being the only son to Blithgora king of Egypt, who being extraordinarily well pleased with the report, could reap no perfect rest, till he had engag'd himself a participator of his cousin's adventurous proceedings : Whereupon finding Thalmeno in a desolate harbour, he very familiarly discovered to him the news he had heard of his design'd intentions ; which Thalmeno no sooner understood, but he was overjoy'd that he had found so princely a partner of his future fortunes, and to the purity of his affectionate entreaty, most soon condescended : So that each taking a page, with such necessities as were besitting their voyage, they very closely, in a night, when the moon being

being overshadow'd with obscure clouds, and seem'd to condescend to their resolutions, most secretly departed, directing their course to Trapani, one of the chiefest ports in Cicilia; where finding an Argazil ready to set sail, bound for the country of Arabia, they instantly imbarck'd themselves, rejoicing that dame Fortune had so soon provided them a speedy passage, without making the king or the court acquainted with their pretensions. Soon were these two tender princes missing, and for their absence, what sorrowful mournings, melancholy aggravations, and distemper'd dolefulness was in all places, but especially in the palace royal, I refer to the discreet reader's impartial censure. And in that respect that our history depends not on their bewailings, but on the adventurous proceedings of our bloomy young princes, I will for a while leave their sorrows to be comforted by virtue of patience, and return again to the commonwealth of Neptune, whereon these our princely partners sail'd; who appearing upon the deck, not only reap'd the pleasure to see the Armato furiously cut the surges of the seas, but also enjoy'd the prerogative of delectable exhilaration, in beholding the fruitful gale fairly blow the swan-like sails from the tall mast: Which so long lasted, that in time they were fortunately come within knowledge of their desired port, whereat the whole company, but especially our two young princes, rejoiced; they forthwith rendered many millions of thanks to

divine Jove, that so favourably had blest them with the wish'd for success: Who seeing their Argazil at an anchor, and having invested themselves with other garments, did thereupon desire the master to set them ashore, which immediately was accomplished; at whose triumphant departure the mariners let fly such a thundering peal of ordnance, that the report thereof rebounding from the concavity of the clifty shores, not only made these our valorous martialists tremble, but also terrify'd Bellona herself, being resident in the citadel of her celestial monarch; but the smoak being evaporated with the freshness of the furious wind, our princes instantly attain the shore, and royally rewarding the boat-swain's gang, they betook themselves to their desperate adventures; where thro' the African desarts, they solitarily so long travell'd, that at last, being destitute of food, and not finding wherewith to suffice nature, in respect these parts were not inhabited, they passionately tracing these unknown groves, very lamentably began to exclaim upon the inhuman disasters of their miserable calamities; but in vain, for they espy'd no food to replenish their hungry appetites, unless to have fed upon unknown roots, which were not agreeable to their palates; but hoping e're long to harbour themselves in some homely cottage, where with rustical fare they might appease their hunger: upon the foundation of which hope, advancing their pace, they at last came to
the

the descent of a deep valley, where, with a faint courage, very pensively walking, they through a thicket of an ancient forest, espy'd the architecture of some domestical mansion, which to their sorrowful contemplations, produc'd unexpected encouragement; but resuming courage to themselves, thereunto directed their course; where, being to the outward gate arriv'd, they beheld a famous castle; but so solitary situated in the center of the forest, that the wind piercing most dolefully through the branches of the lofty cedars, made such a mournful murmur, that the dolefulness thereof drove our two young princes into a fit of effeminate despair; but at last, hunger so far constrain'd them, they resolv'd to enter; where opening the outward gate, they pass'd the first court without espying any; and entering the second, they beheld a delicious court, most ingeniously pav'd wito curious marble, which very stately was circumferenc'd with a sumptuous arched gallery, prop'd up by pillars of bright shining alabaster; casting their eyes a small distance, they espy'd a lady, sweet and amiable, why under the shady leaves of a fig-tree, sat recreating her senses with the sweet sound of a well-tun'd lute, to which she joyn'd her ravishing voice, and harmoniously breath'd out these sorrowful verses:

Ah! gentle sleep, thou easer of my woes,
Softly and quickly let my eyes dispose

Themselves to pleasing slumbers, that I may
In dreams possess those joys deny'd by day :
Joys, which if real, were to that degree
So great, were only fit for gods, not me :
Then since prince Mædor does no pity take,
Let me but dream, I'd never wish to wake.

The which, as soon as she had ended, repeating over divers times the name of Medor, one might easily perceive many crystal tears distill down her vermilion cheeks, as also hear many deep sighs which her perplex'd heart sent forth, as testimonials of her tormented passions ; and therewithal lifting up her eyes towards the seat of her celestial maker, being overwhelm'd with too many insupportable sorrows, she instantly fainting to the ground, fell into a dangerous trance. Which tragical object our two princes perceiving, hastily stept to her assistance, and raising her from the flowery bank whereon she fell, they used such preservative means for her recovery, as their unskilful, tho' willing industry, could afford them ; so that in time, by good fortune, she again recover'd ; and seeing these two strangers before her, she was surpriz'd ; and having anger seated on her brow, utter'd these words :

Gentlemen, for so your aspects invite me to term you, if you knew how divinely quiet I endur'd this deadly slumber into which I was entered, I absolutely know, or at least believe, that in equity and reason,
you

you would have refrain'd from disturbing me, and permitted me to reap the benefit of my consolation; but since things past cannot be recall'd, because accidents once produc'd, do soon fly far, having time's wings, I will, on condition you immediately depart, for this your first offence, not esteem you guilty. I have here wholly betaken myself to sorrowfulness, and have long since devoted my zeal to the shrine of disconsolation; my desire is neither to see nor be seen, but rather to lead the pilgrimage of my life from the sight of any. This solitary place I have elected for my habitation; and here, unless death prevent my premeditations, I resolve to wait the return of a dear friend of mine, which inconstant fortune many months hath detain'd from me. I, in reality hate the sight of any, and for his sake loath the prospect of all. Therefore, at the request of a sorrowful lady, I beseech you delay not to depart, that according to my accusom'd manner, I may sincerely, upon the altar of his absence, devoutly sacrifice my affectionate sighs, in token, that till death, in the garden of my maiden amity, the semblance of his self, and idea of his perfections, shall, to my everlasting comfort, immortally flourish.

The princes with attentive ears listened to the effect of her speeches, and having both very lowly made their obeysance, Thalmeno address'd himself to her thus :

Madam,

MAdam, If our sudden arrival hath prejudiced your sorrowful devotions, or detained you from performing those vows to him, who is happier than any of his fellow-creatures, in being beloved by so much virtue as dwells in you ; we are ready to acknowledge our defect in being so presumptuous, and express our sorrow ; but since the purity of our pretence may plead for the excuse of our rudeness, and the innocency of our resolutions, crave remission for our boldness, we doubt not, but when hearing of our sorrowful relation, you will in equity afford us your gracious pardon, and bury all our offences in the grave of oblivion.

To give you an account, madam, of our extraction : We are both princes, and one, heir apparent to the crown of Egypt, and the other to the diadem of Cicilia ; our names Palmo and Thalmeno, who in the prime of our minorities, resolved to travel, and so privately embarking ourselves, without leave of our royal parents, we of late arrived in the next bordering harbour ; since which time, as faithless and erroneous fortune guided us, we stray'd into an unknown desert, where these three days we have dangerously travelled, without finding sustenance to relieve our hunger ; so that at last, ranging the solitary forests, we fortunately arrived to this your castle : Our design, madam, is not to incur your indignation, but earnestly to implore your relief, that, in paying the debt we owe to nature,

we

we may avoid the tyrannizing empire of death, which most inhumanly doth now begin to reign over us; which if your gentle pity extends itself so far, we shall continually remain servants both to your bounty and beauty; and till the period of death, hold the term of our lives as again repurchased by your majestical merits, and likewise depart when it shall please you to command us.

The lady pondering upon these deplorable speeches, very soon conceived in her breast a motion of relaxation, secretly inspiring her to entertain them with all agreeable curiosity: So that taking of them kindly by the hand, she conducted them to a very sumptuous dining-room, and commanding her virgins to furnish the table with such as her solitary habitation could afford, they very orderly, without any prolix ceremonies, fell hungrily to their meat; till repast being done, and the princes satisfied, Thalmeno still burning with desire to know the effectual cause of this lady's desolate retirement, with a princely grace, continued his preceding discourse.

Madam, If the repetition of your misfortunes renew not your grief, or the display of your sorrows, increase not your disconsolations, I should esteem it a great happiness, might I obtain so much favour at your fair hands, as to inform us why you make this desert your domestical mansion, and the occasion, why, with numberless sighs,

sighs, you repeat the name of Medor. Indeed, madam, so much beauty and divine perfections should rather besit a monarch's court than a rural habitation, and a prince's bed than a pilgrim's cottage; but experience teaches us, that all are subject to fate, and none exempted from adversity; for as soon the prince as the peasant, the lady of honour as the poorest virgin, are or may be cross'd with Cupid's darts, the sting of sorrow, or the tyranny of misfortune; therefore, dear madam, if any of these offensive accidents have befallen you, with the sovereign salve of patience so mollify your passions, and raze out your sorrows, that the residence of aggravation may not over-top the blossoms of your flourishing juvenility, and so tragically bring yourself to the untimely end of a desperate martyrdom.

Prince Thalmeno having ended his speech, the lady made him this answer:

MOST virtuous prince, I will inform you, that I have long since loved a noble cavalier; his name I shall forbear mentioning, by reason the motive will renew the birth of my accustomed disconsolateness, yet in respect you shall not condemn me of perverse ingratitude, I will, if you please to attend my arrival, go to my closet, and there constrain my trembling pen to set forth the secrets of his mistress's sorrows, and in effect, to discover the sole history of my, as yet, tragical misfortunes.

Our two young princes rejoicing at this great favour, accepted of her kind proffer; and so having familiarly saluted each other, she immediately departed to her closet; but by that time an hour was spent, the lady descending the stairs, presenting herself to their views, delivered herself in this short speech:

MOST renowned princes! to satisfy your earnest demands, here take this scroll, wherein, though rudely, yet sincerely, I have demonstrated the cause of my retirement, and penned down the griefs which in heart I do more than sorrowfully endure. My present wealth is such, as I cannot afford you many gifts; yet, as a testimony of my zealous affection toward you, take this provision, and small sums of worthless gold to supply your necessities, when any future occasion shall present. What incommodious entertainment you have met withal in this castle, I pray forget with favour, or what is wanting of respect of me, I beseech you remit with partiality, in recompence whereof, I will sacrifice my devout prayers for the establishing of your prosperity, and beseech heaven to send you a most fortunate and safe return; in hope whereof, betaking you to your journey, and myself to my accustomed cell of solitariness, I most dolefully, in all honour, take my sorrowful leave.

Thalmeno and palmo receiving the scroll, with tears in their eyes, kissed her mournful cheeks, and so rendering her millions of thanks

thanks for their unmerited courteous entertainment, most sorrowfully departed, directing their course to a very high mountain, whose top having attained, they burned with desire to peruse the scroll, that at last, casting themselves on a green bank, embellished with the essence of many diaper'd flowers, under the covert of a stately pine-tree, whose branches were likewise apparell'd with a summer's vesture; taking the scroll, and opening it, found these lines contained in it.

ADmired princes! for your virtuous and heroick qualities, being you have requested my abrupt muse, to relate to you the occasion of this my solitary retirement; know valorous princes, I am Florina, the only daughter of Agenor, king of Numidia; who attaining to the perfect age, wherein nature seems to triumph in the delectable pleasures of nuptial ceremonies, I was sought for in marriage by divers princes, both of Africa and Europe; whereof, as the king my father affected some for their private wealth, so others I hated for their publick enormities, in such sort, that to be plain, I could not esteem of any with whom I was contented to finish the remainder of this my terrestrial pilgrimage; by virtue thereof, I some two years remained without either fixing my eyes upon the influence of love, or ever devoting my breast to the shrine of affection. But at last, Cupid stormed at my liberty, and Venus at my single estate, acknow-

ledging that there was no life but love, nor no Paradise but the pleasure of marriage, they so bent their invective ambition against my innocency, that at last, by the means of fortune, which had intruded herself in the union of their simpathy, they unexpectedly, to my father's court, sent a lovely young prince, named Medor, being son and heir to Orlando king of Biasara, which prince being penetrated with the flying report of my worthless person, came to Numidia, to protest himself my servant; upon whose beautiful aspect I no sooner fix'd my eyes but I immediately felt the flames of fancy sparkle within my tormented breast. On the other side, prince Medor so often frequented our royal palace, that at last, if his protestations were unfeigned, he reposed his bliss in my beauty, and reaped his chiefest pleasure in enjoying my desired presence: So that time did, by reason of many amorous glances, so firmly unite our affections with combined ratification, that in few days, I became mistress of his thoughts, and he master of my imaginations.

But now despitiful destiny began to display part of his infidelity, for the news of this our late familiarity being noised throughout the court, did at last arrive to the king, my father's ears, who raging at this unexpected event, by reason he bore malice to Orlando prince Medor's father, resolved not only to nip the blossoms of this our tender affections in the April of their minority,

city, but also to blast the buds of our love in the spring-time of their juvenility; in pursuance whereof, sending for prince Medor before him, so check'd him up with thundering threats, and frown'd at him with invective speeches, that in short, though prince Medor began with a pithy oration to plead for himself, and in his defence to descant upon his unmerited cruelty, he not only commanded him to silence, but also charged him to depart the territories of his kingdom.

An infortunate sentence for so sweet a prince! and most infortunate, because, being constrained to depart, he left me desolate in the stormy surges of perplexity! Then after the king my father had bereaved me of this my princely lover, within whose breast I reposed my happiness, being not appeased with this inhumanity, but still severely determining to invest me with the recognition of his wrath, he so cruelly used me, and so unnaturally restrained my liberty, that I could not one minute reap repose of my imaginations, but continually lived in a most tormented calamity; in respect whereof, sacrificing my oraisons upon the altar of prince Medor's absence, and devolving my contemplations to the beautiful idea of his excellencies, accounting courtly joys vain-glorious trifles, and a princely life a splendid misery, in a cymmerian night, which seemed to allow of my resolutions, I departed the court, and betook myself to the establishing of so sorrowful a life: So at last,
fortune

fortune resolving to assist me in my misery, very happily made me retire hither; which solitary castle doth so correspond with my mournful fancy, that for the ardent affection which I bear prince Medor, I firmly resolve either to attend his expected arrival, or else to finish my days in manifestation of my fidelity. Therefore, dear princes, attribute my disobedience to my parents a favourable censure, and I resolve that what my pen proscribeth, my capacity shall perform; that is, immortally to remain faithful to prince Medor, or everlastingly unfriendly to myself.

Which scroll they had no sooner perused, but pitying the estate of the solitary lady, they instantly vowed to range the confines of Africa, in re-searching prince Medor, that by their friendly diligence, Florina from her deplorable condition might be delivered: By virtue of which infus'd resolution, raising themselves from the verdant grass they at last, with familiar amity, prosecuted their journey in such a pleasant manner, that Phoebus adorning the day with his radiant beams, they traversing many lofty mountains, and pleasant valleys, at last, towards the approach of drowsy Vesper, arrived to a silver fountain o'erveil'd with a canopy of a sprouting cypress, who frizzling his curled locks, took this crystal spring to be his reflective mirrour, whereon with Narcissus, delighting to gaze, he continually trimmed himself in his verdant jollity.

lity. Many angelical nymphs they likewise saw circumferencing this fountain in a dance, who resembling Daphne, had their splendid hair dallying with the nectar-breath of amiable Zephyrus, being all apparell'd in crimson robes, embroidered with lillies and cowslips; who no sooner beheld our two chevaliers approaching, but thinking that the sheperds and satyrs had sent them as spies, thereby to intrap them in some traitorous ambuscado, they forthwith flew thro' the thickets, far swifter than ever did Atalanta, when she ran with Hippomenes: Our princes seeing this amorous troop fled, were exceeding sorrowful that their arrival hindered their pastimes, so that saluting them with a shrill hollow, and perceiving none returned, they instantly fate them down upon the brim of the fountain; where gathering many daffadillies and other flowers, they dipping in the orient water, therewith besprinkled their faces to refresh their spirits; so long, till reflecting their sight upon the excellency of the neighbouring pasture, they at last espy'd a verdant tent, on whose lofty turret a snow white ensign flourish'd in the air; whereat admiring, because they could not conjecture what this delightful object signified, they both very joyful directed their course thither; which no sooner they approached, but they perceived it to be an eglantine bower, bespread with colombines and damask roses, so that burning with desire to survey every part of it, they at last resolutely entered; where a
snowy

snowy beagle, with Argus eyes, vigilantly saluted them with his shrill barking note, which arowling a nymph his mistress from her repose, at this unexpected alarm began to tear through the bower.

But Venus and Diana, having metamorphos'd their fore-past malice to a future sympathy, so ordain'd, that her amber locks should be entangled in the Eglantine briars; whereat our princes taking hold of her loose garments, did, notwithstanding her force, compel her to stay; but the nymph thinking them to be Apollo and Jove, who had descended from heaven to ravish her virginity on earth, bitterly cry'd out, and miserably tore the tresses of her hair in a rage, the which our princes perceiving, with fair exhortative speeches began to appease her aggravation, requesting her only to conduct them to some adjoining cottage, where for that night they might assuredly rest in some peaceful tranquility. Whereat this jolly nymph raising herself from the earth, and returning them millions of thanks, bedecking her lilly countenance with a cherry complexion, very freely conducted them through the woods and forests, where many troops of light-footed satyrs ran before as triumphant heralds to proclaim them passage; so long till radiant Titan flying the zenith of our horizon to light the obscure antipodes, she at last brought us to a sumptuous palace, whose pyramids and towers loftily presumed to elevate the tops in the azure skies; the glorious sight whereof, made

made them to conjecture it to be that admired palace of Felicia, so much dignified by the pens of civil and prophane poets; for the walls were of glistering alabaster: the gates of crystal, the pavement of the black jet, intermix'd with azur'd marble, the battlements of refined gold, the arches of stately porphyry, the windows of transparent diamonds, beset with carbuncles and sapphires, and the roof of vermillion coral, wrought checkerwise, with orient guards of silver: the interior lineaments owed nothing in correspondent to the outward edifice; for the portals and galleries were of white ivory, the bedsteads of clarent amber, the coverlids and curtains of green damask, imbossed with emeralds and chrysolytes, and the tapestry of crimson velvet embroider'd with amethysts and pearl: In the spacious court and delicious bowers which Flora had adorn'd with the treasures of her painted drapery were likewise many curious fountains, some convey'd thither by the instinct of nature, and others they erected by the ingenuity of art. There you might have seen Diana rais'd aloft upon a stately pillar, with a bow in one hand, and a banner, wherein was character'd chastity in the other; from whose alabaster paps the water, sweet distilling, was by her nymphs in crystal vessels receiv'd, and so artificially convey'd to the fountain's center: And also another, where Pallas, Minerva, and Juno, do from their beauteous breasts rain veins of water upon the faces of Daphne and Philomela; the
which

which entering their coral lips, do distill to the concavity of their chrystalline paps, from whence with a stern countenance they furiously spout it in the eyes of inhuman Jupiter, and lustful Texeus: Also upon the borders of these fountains are growing many fruitful fig-trees, whereon artificially range divers harmonious birds, whose celestial musick, according with the waters murmur, doth yield forth many ravishing tunes of angelical melody; so that there wanted no ornaments to make this sumptuous palace a terrestrial paradise: It was impaled with lofty cedars, fenced draw-bridges, and impregnable bulwarks, as also circumferenced with curious rivers, within whose silver streams many snowy swans most pleasantly imbathed themselves; so that our two princes with their nymph, being arrived to this dignified palace, were forthwith met by an ancient matron, who seeming to be the lady thereof, very kindly bad them welcome: Her habit of a sable hue, having her snowy hair hanging down her face, her beauty seem'd to be nipt by age; yet in the lineaments of complexion lay furrowed the anatomy of an indifferent countenance: The arches of her sorrowful eyes were over-veil'd with a crimson dye, from out whose conduits it appear'd many brinish tears had had their issue, which desolate lady, after having had some conference with these our unknown princes, and perceiving how the zeal of their youthful resolutions

resolutions were devoted to travel, she with a faint voice deliver'd herself.

‘ Courteous friends, for such I hope you
‘ are, fear not to enter this palace, but ad-
‘ vance with freedom ; for your eyes shall
‘ be presented with such delightful objects,
‘ as shall both please your thoughts, and
‘ solace your contemplations.’

Whereat she abruptly broke off, and so as fast as she could, fled to the forests. Our princes seeing the sudden departure of this ancient lady, exceedingly admired what this unlook'd for novelty meant ; but at last arming their resolutions, with courage, as also seeing the sable night begin to o'er-veil the element with obscurity, taking leave of their nymph, they boldly entered, where no sooner they had past the outward gate, but they were forthwith met by two glorious virgins, who saluting them with a smiling countenance, arm in arm most lovingly conducted them to a stately theatre, where they beheld many amorous ladies and cavaliers circumferencing themselves in adance : Having for a while filled their eyes, they then by the ladies were conducted to a very rich bed-chamber, where divers frolicksome sparks were unchastly courting their beauteous mistresses, and in such an indecent manner that Vesta, nay, Venus herself, could scarce refrain from blushing at their immoderate familiarity. Being gluttied with variety of unchaste prospects, they were at last, by many radiant tapers lighted to their chambers ; where, to pass away the tedi-
ousness

ousness of the night, two lascivious ladies were proffer'd to bear them company; but our young princes, altho' ardently tempted with carnal enchantments, had their immoveable resolution character'd upon honour's foundation, and not accepting of this unexpected civility, very virtuously craved their absence; when thinking to repose themselves, they were instantly again solicited by two tender virgins, who bringing two ivory lutes in their hands, with their melodious musick, thought to lull their premeditations asleep; their breasts were nakedly unmask'd to the spectator's eye, where one might apparently behold their alabaster paps swell and sink at an instant, as being inspired with the luxurious wind of unsatiable desire. Immodest smiles they had at command, and with the hyæna their eyes darted forth a prejudicial summons; their garments were both gay and loose, in all neatly corresponding with their inward qualities; and their glistening locks most viciously sported with their chrystal complexions, as the amiable fetters of lust to enchant the approachers.

But neither their syren deceitful melody, their venomous glances, nor their alluring lascivious gestures, could either with Circe, charm the genius of our princes, or else, with Medea, inchant their generosity to range beyond the bounds of modesty; but like two religious pilgrims, they valorously fought against vicious concupiscence, and ardently devoted their zeal to the shrine of

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virtue :

virtue: So that not regarding their smiles, nor esteeming of their temptations, they resolutely thrust them out of their chamber, and so securely locking and bolting the door, betook themselves to rest.

But Morpheus had not long detained their spirits in delicious slumber, but having contracted his influence with the instinct of celestial deity, they were in the depth of their nocturnal sleep aroused by a hideous clamour, which rattled in the palace with such a thundering noise, as if the fabrick, nay, foundation thereof were subject to a sudden revolution; grievous groans were plenty, cries were common, and all diverted to such a tempestuous confused chaos, as if the Atlas of the world had in the vivacity of his fury summoned the confines of the earth to the dreadful day of judgment: Whereat our two young princes, as having their obtuse senses repleted with fear, and their heroical fortitude daunted with pusillanimity, instantly left their beds, as if they had been transcending to the infernal concavity of obscure Acheron; thinking that their glass of life was already run, and that inhuman Thanatos had now taken his tyrannical darts in his hand to finish the period of terrestrial catastrophies. But, whilst being thus in the supposed way to destruction, behold there instantly appeared to them a delectable dwarf, apparelled in crimson, which to evaporate their timorous despair, with an angelical voice pronounced these lines:

Fly vice, fly sin, fly earthly vanity,
And with a martial courage fear displace ;
Detract no time, but with celerity,
Come, view the beauty of dame virtue's face.

Our princes seeing this pretty pigmy, and with advised deliberation pondering upon the etymology of his speeches, could not at first refrain from being astonished ; but at last ruminating more seriously which way to elect for their security, they both at last resolv'd to follow the tender guide, thereby to free themselves from the peril of this stratagem : Upon which resolution arming their courage with magnanimity, they, as having Pegasian wings, flew through the courts, directing their pace to a lofty mountain, from whence they espied this glorious palace to be suddenly swallowed up in the earth's concavity, and in such an admired manner, that no appearance of foundation remain'd, but was utterly raz'd out, as if the being thereof had never been erected : Which prospective accident our princes could not at first believe, but instantly thereupon surmis'd that their eyes and imaginations had been deluded with invasions. The dwarf perceiving their doubtful perplexities, ran away from them, and to comfort their passions, the old forlorn lady which they first met, again presented herself to their views ; and so, after having lowly saluted them, very mournfully uttered this speech :

MY sons, says she, my name is Virtue, of my own authority have invented this tragedy for your advantage; the glorious mansion which you have seen destroyed, was the palace of the folly, wherein only remained the imps of luxurious iniquity; who pampering up lustful Cytherea, were always persecutors of chaste Diana; my society they ever disdain'd, and contemptuously smother'd my temples with the contagious incest of debauchery; amongst which diabolical regiment perjury was familiar, swearing no sin, pride a pearl, lust a lord, ambition a saint, and treachery a goddess; but now, my sons, their immoderate pride is past, their unchaste desires extenuated, their fanatical oaths drowned, their aspiring ambition evaporated, their graceless treachery abolish'd, nay, and all their obscene actions with themselves, utterly destroy'd, and furiously sent to the infernal pit of everlasting perdition; therefore beware by their subtle devices, and let the mirror of their misfortunes serve as an instance to impale you within the circumference of piety; and to the end, that being absent, you may still ponder and premeditate upon exhortations; here take this paper, and observe such counsel as I have therein prescribed.

Which having said, she in the twinkling of an eye elevated herself in the air, and so a cloud o'erveiling her in the cincture of

of his embracements, she immediately vanished.

Our princes astonished hereat, took up the paper, and opening it, found these rules contained in it.

1. Build the foundation of thy faith upon purity and piety, that thy zeal be not eclipsed with the contagion of idolatry, but rather perfumed with the sweet incense of sincerity.

2. Let devout prayers be a mediatrix between heaven and thyself: For it is the most assured step to obtain felicity.

3. Conceal thy secrets in the closet of thy breast, lest rashly displaying them to others, thou produce the prejudice of thine own tranquility.

4. Fly ambition, as the poison of the sense; and detest envy, as the canker of thy contemplations.

5. Gaze not on beauty, lest it ingender repentance; but loath a lascivious courtesan, as the scourge of iniquity.

6. In thy actions be faithful; lest being blemish'd with reproach, thou impair thy reputation.

7. Honour thy prince as God's anointed; and if occasion present, live and die for thy country.

8. Detest vain glory, as the venom of sin, and abolish superstition as the cloak of ungodliness.

Which having read, and knowing the sacred influence thereof tended to the establishing

blishing of their celestial tranquility, they so imprinted it in their memories, as it futurely should serve for a fenced circumference, to retain them within the confines of piety: so as triumphing that fortune had presented them with so sacred an instance, they very joyfully departed. But when Aurora, the daughter of Thetis, had no sooner skipp'd from the bowers of Neptune, and saluted the excellency of transplendent Phoebus, but our princes afresh prepared themselves for their journey: When early in the purpled morn, when the radiant Titan begins to give his welcome to the verdant mountains; the satyrs, fawns and nymphs, danced through the forests, and doleful Philomela warbled forth her tragedy; they were by a soft wind, which caused the tender leaves to quaver, made acquainted with the pleasant sound of a ravish'd cornet; the delicious tripple echo whereof, redoubling through the thickness of a curled grove, there next adjoyning, gave such a graceful harmony to the aforesaid melody, that our princes were perforce constrain'd to find out the said unknown excellent Orpheus, to the end he might for a while recreate their distemper'd senses, with the rare exquisiteness of his praise-worthy art: And so directing their courses by their attentive ear, they at last arrived to the prospect of a fair valley, in the midst thereof ran most leisurely a silver stream, whose banks in equal distance were beset with fruitful limon trees; on the branches where-
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of, they might afar off espy the yellow
citrons naturally growing : Which de-
lightful pleasant prospect so well contented
their youthful imaginations, they bent their
course directly to the said arboury ; where
entering, they espied this famous musician,
a beautiful young boy, apparelled in white,
and crowned with a laurel garland, and set
upon a flow'ry bank, close by the river's side,
unto whose melody most attentively listen-
ing, they at last in a fragrant bower of eg-
lantine, espied an aged father, which as it
seem'd by the furrows of his face, had in his
tender years endured many distastful cala-
mities ; his habit was of black sable, which
reaching not so low as his knees, was about
his waist begirt with a willow striple ; his
visage was pale and wan, and his snowy
beard descended almost to his sorrowful
middle ; in his hand he held a brazeil
staff, which was the feeble supporter of his
withered age ; and before him, on a table
of swan-like alabaster, lay open Burton's
anatomy of melancholy, gilded and extra-
ordinary beautiful, whereon in reading, he
solitarily busied the chimera of his torment-
ed brain ; which prospect as soon as our
princes espied, being transported with desire
to know the cause of his disconsolate retire-
ment, they boldly entered : Where inter-
rupting him from his earnest study, prince
Palmo address'd himself to him as followeth :

‘ Most venerable father, if our auda-
cious arrival have disturbed your study, or
our presence your patience ; we beseech

to pardon the first, though a rash attempt; and excuse the second, as being an unwilling enterprize. Travellers ears are, you know, lovers of novelties, and are as earnest in satisfying their curiosity, as the Antipodes is of the sun's brightness, therefore, reverend sir, we earnestly beseech you, to relate to us the occasion of this solitary retirement, and the motive which induced you to embrace this austere life; and also to afford us so much favour, as we may under the support of your goodness, erect our residence, for a while; and so avoiding the scandalous imputation of vagabonds, betake our resolutions to the obtaining of peaceful tranquility.'

The ancient father perceiving by his speeches, that he had been train'd up in the school of virtue; and also judged by their physiognomy they were from some noble extraction, very freely, but with a gravity which seem'd to embellish his speeches, return'd them this friendly reply.

'Gentlemen, your arrival hath neither disturbed my study, nor your presence prejudiced my patience; for as my nature is not attractive to severity on the one side; so on the contrary, I make use of the other at leisure; therefore to my sorrowful cell you are both very welcome; and in respect a friendly demand deserveth a familiar reply, know gentlemen, that the bower which I have here caused to be erected within the incirclets of this fruitful grove, I make my
retiring

retiring place, when passionate fancies begin to surround my distemper'd senses. This boy being an orphan, for charities sake I have caused to be instructed in shrill musick, to the end that when my eyes with over-much reading, he may with his loud melody arouse my spirits from the thoughts of slumber, and so put me in mind of my accustomed duty, which in heart I immortally owe to the sorrowful shrine of my dead saint, which whilst she lived, I affected more dearly than myself; and being now dead, will honour with such ardent fidelity, that future ages shall have meritorious instance, to acknowledge, that till death, and after, to my fair Excellina I remain'd compleatly constant.

Ah sweet Excellina! which sacred name when I repeat, enforceth my cordial blood to distill from my sorrowful heart, and also my brinish tears to descend my penitent cheeks; she! oh she! was the only daughter of a valorous knight, whom I long courted with unfeigned love, and at last having received many bitter repulses, obtain'd the enjoyment of her gracious affection; whereof her shrewish step-mother being by misfortune thoroughly advertised, as one that rather sought her ruin than advancement, she so severely watched her, and most inhumanly used her, that her father being absent in a far journey, she most tyrannously immur'd her up in a vestal dungeon; where seeing she could by no means obtain a sight of me, in bitter anguish, bidding the world,

but most chiefly me, farewell ! Most dolefully yielded nature her due ; in remembrance of whom, at the end of this grove, in a fragrant valley, I have, as duty and love prompted me, erected a tomb, whereunto, till the period of my days, I have vowed daily to offer her not only my devout oraisons, that I may quickly follow her, but also my throbbing sighs, as repentant witnesses of my calamity : Therefore gentlemen, if you please to afford so much time to walk thither, your eyes may be spectators of that which I have with grief and aggravation discover'd to you, and after give you such instructions in your travels, that doubtless, if the celestial influence cross not your fortunes, you shall find them very profitable to you, and in your adventures no way prejudicial.'

The two princes returning him thanks for his proffer'd civilities, very willingly to his demand, soon condescended, and so walking through ranks of lofty cedars, which with their verdant branches beautify'd the adjoyning silver stream, they at last arriv'd to a sacred chappel, which with alabaster walls circumferenced that glorious tomb ; where entered, they espy'd it so adorn'd with munificent curious workmanship, that the view thereof drove them speedily to approach near to it, where they beheld the body of it to be of dove-white ivory, whose cover being of radiant jet, and upon it the picture of Excellina in crimson colours, most ingeniously portrayed, and under her feet,

in

in characters of gold, enamell'd with azure,
this epitaph :

Within this ivory tomb doth lye
The phoenix of pure modesty,
Sweet Excelline ! whose beauty rare
With Helen's fame may well compare :
Nay, Helen's fame surpassing sure,
Which did the Grecian's love procure ;
Being in Jove's imperial sight
A nymph excelling Juno bright :
Cut off by fatal sisters three,
In confidence of love's plaudite.
Therefore if any pass this way,
And with penitential tears do pray,
That she may in the Elizian plain
Until eternity remain ;
Still crown'd with heart's delicious joy,
And freed from rage of dire annoy.

Which epitaph they having no sooner
read ; as also renewing the tomb and her
effigies, they very sorrowful departed to find
out the ancient mourner, who purposely
attending their coming, took them by the
hand, the tears appearing in his eyes, with
some faltring in his speech, he continued
his discourse.

' Ah gentlemen ! my grief is such, that I
loath my life ; and were it not too offensive
to my soul, I could willingly be instrumen-
tal to my own untimely martyrdom, but
alas ! I know that that would be a sacrifice
too abominable in the sight of heaven ;
which is the only rein that withdraws me from
executing

executing my resolutions; for though I live, I live discontented, and by my death my grief would enjoy a period, should I, the most miserable of all mankind, be the occasion of so much virtue's destruction? Or, by my means should so noble a virgin be deprived of her future felicity; no Delmon, resolve not to live, but die in memory of her martyrdom; for so shall thy aggravations end, and thy everlasting joys commence.'

Our two princes, seeing him launch out so far in the diversity of amorous sorrow, thought it requisite to recal him from his passionate sadness; and interrupted him, Thalmeno began as followeth:

' Venerable sir, I should think the effects of amorous contemplation should be now, through age, purg'd from your memory, and the remembrance of past pleasures dry'd up in oblivion; for it is not for you who are ready to salute the grave, to sacrifice sighs to Cupid; but rather for juvenile blood to fight under the banner of beauty. Remember therefore with yourself, that Venus by Apellet's boy was painted with fresh colours, and not with a wither'd visage; and though Vulcan offer'd to the shrine of Juno, yet he at last acknowledg'd his fault, and was for his simplicity laugh'd at by Jupiter: Therefore, sir, consider now with your self, that that fair Excelline whom you ador'd, is now extinct, and cannot now by any mortal means be again revived; in respect whereof, pray dry up those tears, and forget any

any more to devote your oraisons to the image of Cytherea; thus fighting against concupiscence, your actions may approve you to be unspotted for the celestial regions, and while tracing on this earthly vale of misery, to observe a blissful gracefulness of aged staidness.'

Delmon perceiving he was answer'd somewhat roundly, instantly wept afresh, because their exhortive speeches touch'd him to the quick: But at last comforting his sorrowful muse with patience, he with his tears requested them to enter his cell, and to accept of such homely fare as his poverty could afford, whereunto they willingly agreed; and so deluding the time with a familiar conference, they a long time solaced themselves in amorous prattle, till at last repast being ended, and the princes ready to depart, Delmon, with as much freedom as his passion would permit, at their farewell gave them these instructions.

'Heroick gentlemen, seeing your resolutions are bent to travel, I shall inform you, that some leagues from hence in the kingdom of Zanfara, reigns the famous Brilion, whose virtue doth no less rejoyce his subjects, than his valour doth daunt his enemies; rewarding each according to his merits, and retaining no honour from those who demonstrate their actions to be desolate magnanimous; so that for wisdom he may well be esteemed a Solomon; for majesty a Cæsar; for prowess a Scipio; and for benignity an Alexander: His court may also be

be term'd the rendezvous of the flower of chivalry ; for there are always resident abundance of cavaliers ; which as they esteem discretion a chief point of valour, so they are no ways backward to adventure their lives for the establishing of their fame ; their senators likewise are both grave, politick and provident ; which from the sincerity of their contemplations, account ambition a heinous crime, and treachery a deadly sin. The pastors also are both zealous and venturesome, admonishing their flocks, not like Baal's priests, to place their religion upon diabolical idolatry, but to ground their zeal upon that celestial temple, whose foundation and pavement, is faith and purity ; whose doors and arches, devotion and amity ; whose pillars and windows, piety and sincerity ; whose galleries and towers are glorification and humility : their ladies and damsels are likewise both gracious and fair, and generally so chaste, as if Diana and nature had ordain'd them with the pride of their excellency ; being of gesture, modest of capacity, quick of quality, kind, and of behaviour, courteous.

Therefore, gentlemen, if you direct your course thither, you shall generally see each live by the fertility of his own land, each reap the fruit of his own vine, and content sit smiling in every corner : There may you behold the fragrant fields, adorn'd with their verdant vestures, the lofty trees with their gay garments, and the delicious arbours with their diaper'd treasure of Flora ; as
also

also the mountains o'er-veild with snow-white flocks, their meadows with the riches of Ceres, and their vallies with daffadils and prime flowers. In their parks you may see regiments of fallow deer running untaken; and in their forests you may behold troops of nymphs trace unravish'd; and to be brief, on every bush harmonious birds warbling forth their melody.

Thalmeno and Palmo perceiving that Delmon had finish'd his speech, being transported with the report of so flourishing a kingdom, giving him thanks for their kind entertainment, and for his virtuous exhortations, very joyfully departed: where travelling a long time these unknown countries, they at last very fortunately arriv'd at the chieftest city of Zanfara, where the court then was; and taking up their lodging in the best inn which the city did afford, they there some days rested, to refresh themselves of their forepast troublesome travels; and after having, as was requisite, given almighty Jove most humble thanks for their safe arrival, they betook themselves to their private parley, where Thalmeno began as follows:

‘ Dear cousin, We are now in a kingdom far from our native country; and therefore it behoves us to settle our proceedings upon the main of some resolution, to the end we may futurely avoid the receipt of ensuing misfortunes, therefore understanding that the king exceedingly delighteth in heroical virtues, it were not in my opinion unfit to
betake

betake ourselves under the umbrage of his service, where cherishing our valorous magnanimity, we may produce the demonstrations of dignify'd princely atchievements, whose effectual apparitions in the eyes of all spectators may justly purchase us the title of gallant admiration.'

Prince Palmo hearing Thalmeno utter this resolution, very instantly returned him this answer :

' Most affectionate cousin, I agree to what you are pleased to determine ; therefore let us set apart all delays, and proffer ourselves to the king's service ; this day I understand he hunts in a forest near adjoyning the court ; where if you please, we may present him with a submissive supplication, thereby to intrude ourselves within his princely service ; but let our names be obscured under the cloud of secrecy ; so that Thalmeno may be termed Thalmio ; and my name of Palmo changed to Plivio ; justifying ourselves to be knights of Arabia.'

This pleasant invention was well liked of by Thalmeno, so solacing their fancy, they forthwith indicted this supplication, which by a young knight, they sent to the king's majesty, the tenour whereof follows :

To the most puissant, famous and flourishing prince Brilion, king of Zanfara.

Royal Sir,

YOUR magnanimous fame by the herald of report, has arriv'd to many cavaliers understanding, in such a degree, that they

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not only admire at your princely valour, but likewise wonder at your virtuous animosity; so as their thoughts burning with desire to be made possessors of your gracious presence, and their resolutions flaming with applause to be spectators of your heroical actions; they have upon the altar of fame, long since devoted their resolutions to direct their course to your country; amongst whom, we Thalmo and Plivio, two knights of Arabia, our capacities being penetrated with the report of your affability, have undertaken this journey, to be made spectators of your renowned personage; so that being arriv'd at your flourishing palace, we most humbly beseech you to accept of us into your dignify'd service; assuring you that our valour and fidelity shall be such, as shall testify our resolutions to take their off-spring from magnanimity: So imploring your majesty to admit us into your royal service, and to honour us with that title to be invested your servants, we in all humility prostrating our lives to your gracious command, remain,

Your majesty's most devoted vassals,
Thalmo and Plivio.

The supplication was no sooner presented to the king, but forthwith he commanded the two foreign knights to be admitted into his presence, where saluting them in such a manner equivalent to his royalty, he very courteously accepted of their voluntary service; which famous acceptance adding a plausible hope to our prince's expectations, made

made them conjecture, they were now mounting the steps of honour: But to conclude, their valorous actions, virtuous demeanour, gallant comportment, heroical courteousness, and princely gravity, did so conquer the affections, not only of the king, but of the nobility and gentry likewise; that in a manner all the island of Cicilia esteemed them worthy the prize of Olympian victory; which by often demonstrations of their gallantry, did so gain the king's favour, that he preferred them both, and appointed Thalgo to attend on the princess Athelia his daughter; and established Plivio to be governour of Ithaca castle, wherein the fair princess Mersilva, daughter unto Samor, king of Bohemia, was retain'd prisoner; but leaving Plivio and the princess Mersilva, to fortune's protection, we will for a while discourse of Thalgo and the fair Athelia.

In a pleasant morn, before the pearled dew was exhal'd by the shining rays of golden Phoebus, when the fragrant flowers were displaying the pride of their beauty, and the melodious birds on the swelling bushes, straining forth their melody, it chanced that Thalgo, being captivated with the beauty of Athelia, his princess, betook himself into the fields, as well to refresh his tormented mind, as to make the flow'ry meadows acquainted with his amorous fancies; when directing his pensive course to the verdant forests, he at last arriv'd to a spacious beach tree, whose branches expelling the darts of Titan, made a compleat shade for all tired passengers to repose

repose themselves: which pleasant umbrage corresponding with Thalmó's passions, he cast himself down on a bank of flowers, and with an ardent affection repeated these verses.

We to all conqu'ring beauty bow,
its pleasing powers admire;
But I ne'er saw that face till now
that like her's could inspire:
Now I may say I have met with one,
amazes all mankind;
And like men gazing on the sun,
with too much light am blind.

Soft as the tender moving sighs,
when longing lovers meet;
Like the divining prophet's wife,
and like blown roses sweet:
Majestick, gay, reserv'd, yet free,
each happy night a bride;
A mien like awful majesty,
and yet no spark of pride.

The patriarch to gain a wife,
chaste, beautiful and young,
Serv'd fourteen years a painful life,
and never thought it long:
Ah! were she to reward such care,
and life so long should stay,
Not fourteen, but four hundred years,
would seem but as one day.

Having thus vented his passions, and made the forests acquainted with the prælude of his malady, he forthwith, as being submerged with the variety of amorous contemplation,

templation, resolv'd to return : But fortune willing to smoothe up his fancies in an extasy of contentation, so ordained, that her illustrious highness the princess Athelia with her troop of ladies, should travel that way : Glad at this heavenly opportunity, blushing a little because the celestial object created in him those raptures ; but elevating his resolutions upon the wing of honour, and investing his courage with the consideration of magnanimity, he audaciously determined to present her with the idea of his affection ; by virtue whereof, at last finding her sequestred from her attendant ladies, and resident within a myrtle bower, in the midst whereof she gazed on a silver fountain, there convey'd by dame nature ; he casting aside all effeminateness, took this opportunity of addressing himself to her ; after those ceremonies due to her royal person were ended, he began as followeth :

‘ Royal madam, when by the aid of fortune I espy'd so much beauty, I immediately felt my tender breast to be inspir'd with the endurance of a lover's passion, and to such a degree, that these eyes ever since conceiving their chiefest contentation at so divine an object, hath so firmly sworn my fidelity to the celestial service of your super-excellent deity, that I utterly abandon the contemplation of all others, and sincerely betake my inward devotions to the shrine of your perfections : At the appearance of so much brightness, my senses were so much captivated, that, madam, all that I am capable

pable of, is only to admire you ; my birth is such that it known to you, perhaps might create in you a rendrance of accomplishment to my breast's expectation ; upon which I will not now descant, because the motive thereof shall not move you to term me by the phrase of a peevish insinuator ; but, dear madam, if my sighs might disclose, my tears explain, or my passions discover, with what a zealous flame of affectionate love my heart possesses in resemblance of your sacred idea, I not only think, but resolve that your gracious self would at the first report, not only recompence my desert with the reward of my merits, but also repay my fidelity with the remuneration of your affection ; whereof till the gods shall by inspiration partly advertise you, I will till the period of my limited pilgrimage, remain as constant to the fair princess Athelia, as I wish she should be affable to perplex'd

THALMO.

The princess over-veiling her lilly cheeks, with a crimson dye, on a sudden as much blush'd as Diana when she espied unlook'd for Acteon ; and so metamorphosing her pleasant physiognomy to a melancholy complexion (being altogether unacquainted with such amorous encounters) bending her brows, within the furrows of whose lineaments anger sat triumphant, she very sharply return'd him this answer :

' Why Thalmo, said she, hath my too much kindness made thee so arrogant, or my

my undeserv'd favour so presumptuous, that thou now givest wing to thy tongue, to run absolutely so lavish? Hath my affableness emboldened thee to aspire so high, as to declare thy affection to one so much thy superiour? Hath idleness in my service taught thee to adorn thy tongue with flattery? And is there no object for thee to aim at, but me? Ah! fond *Thalmo*, and therefore fond, because possessest with a peevish fancy: As thou deridest my beauty, I will laugh at thy folly; and in accounting me fair, I will esteem thee frivolous. For thy birth, know, I disdain it as nothing, and thy self as less: If thou hast sacrificed sighs, or shed tears for my sake, why expect a recompence where there is no satisfaction to be made; and hereafter, be wiser to engender a conception of the like simplicity. To be brief, refrain from prosecuting thy audacious folly, or else I will use such means that the king, my father, shall qualify your courage, by nipping the blossoms of your flourishing estate.'

This thundering answer proceeding from a princess's mouth, might doubtless have made many fresh-water soldiers retire for fear; but our valorous *Thalmo* disdaining to quit the siege for the first repulse; repairing his sense, and furnishing his muse with a fresh supply, very boldly continu'd his combat as followeth:

'Madam, if your royal highness conjectures, that in discovering my affections I flatter your merits with a shew of derision, you

you greatly wrong my honour, in respect my inclination was never attractive to so base an enormity; for what I protest in words, my effects shall manifest to be of truth, against the proudest champion which durst undertake to maintain the contrary: Therefore, dear madam, let not an unconstant thought, so obscure your virgin's breast, that for my faithful affection you term me an ungrateful servant; for if the flower of my affections was predestinated for yourself alone, disdain not him, madam, who in heart hath long since vowed to adore you, and to whom he dedicates his whole devotions; therefore reward not that passion with scorns, whose greatness you cannot doubt, but kindly receive from me so pure a flame of love, which is for ever constant.'

'Thalmo, said she, if thy affection were equal to the tenor of thy speeches, methinks you should at my request bury the repetition thereof in the grave of silence, and not so audaciously be guilty of so great a presumption; if thy phrase of glozing was so unfeigned as thou demonstratest, or thy lovely passions perfect messengers of a sacred constancy, yet my resolutions can never be diverted from reaping the enjoyment of a single life, which I have already upon the altar of Vesta impos'd; my desires rather honour the image of chaste Diana, than adore the shrine of lascivious Venus; rather inclining to the one's principles, than esteeming of the other's precepts; therefore
Thalmo

Thalmo, since my mind cannot be subject to servile love, let my commands be a mediatrix to cause thee to give a solemn leave to thy peevish enterprize.'

Thalmo perceiving the princess pretending to shroud herself under the cloud of a solitary climate, and embrace the austere deity of a saint-like devotion, very earnestly, but with submission, addressed himself to her.

' Ah ! madam, if my words could decypher my passion, or my tongue express my affection, I should then account my self most happy, whereas now I esteem myself of all men most unfortunate. Unfortunate I may well say, in that the idea of my fidelity is obscur'd in the mist of incredulity ; which if you would sincerely weigh in the ballance of reason, I assure myself the zeal of my virtuous constancy would remove the resistance of your mistrust, and as absolutely inform you, that my amorous flame, which none but so charming a goddess as yourself can extinguish, springs from true fidelity : That harsh note of your living a recluse life, I beseech you, madam, to recall ; for the possessing of your presence, and the obtaining of your commands, would yield me the satisfaction of my trembling desire ; so that, madam, if you please to confer that honour on me, of being your dignify'd servant, it shall suffice ; and upon that pleasant foundation will I erect trophies of delightful hope ; and till my merits shall acquire more favour of your princely goodness, I am
resolv'd

resolved immortally to live and die in your service, and to attend on your sacred person with such firm fidelity, virtuous affection and submissive loyalty, that your fair self, and the king your royal father, shall one day bless the hour of my arrival, and have just cause to acknowledge that the sympathy of our affections was predestinated to be united by the condescension of celestial deity.'

The princess Athelia well noting with what fervency he vented his passions, began immediately to produce some motions of compassion; yet in respect he should not conceive any hope, where there was no performance meant to be effected, bitterly return'd him this sharp reply.

'Thalmo, If thou leavest not this idle discourse, I will leave thy presence; for thy obstinate opinion will constrain me to fly thy sight, and hereafter to loath thy company: it is now time to put a period to thy conference, because the tediousness of it tires my senses in understanding it. What I have said, I mean to perform, that is, to live solitarily, and leave you to your passionate folly; and whereas you desire to remain my servant, I thereunto condescend, provided your desires aspire not to my prejudice. Let your future attempts be seasoned with discretion, lest folly over-coming your reason, your downfall may prove the more dangerous. Consider with your self, what the king my father will say, when he hears of your presumption; think not that he will

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approve

approve of your proceedings, but rather curse the very instant of your arrival, and reward therewith the height of his displeasure. Therefore Thalmò, take my advice, repent of your presumption, recall your follies, and be penitent for your offences; in so doing, I will persuade my self to pardon this crime, and exempt the memory of it out of my remembrance.'

Thalmo perceiving the princess had finished her cruel oration, immediately said to her:

' Ah madam ! Is it possible that so much beauty and cruelty can dwell together ? And is it possible, that each being others enemy, they should both seek my ruin ; and so in a seditious sympathy triumph over my martyrdom ? Ah, madam ! make not my fall your felicity, nor my ruin your rejoicing ; but vouchsafe an eye of pity to behold my constancy, the fervency of my fidelity, and the respect of my affections ! Consider, madam, the purity of my pretence, and the desire of my expectation, and think that if Thalmo live, he must love the fair Athelia, and though she hate, yet Thalmo must needs love. What was predestinated for me, I must needs endure, yet in suffering her repulse, I in humility die, to see my fortunes check'd with Athelia's frown. Dear madam, distill into your heart the motion of pity, and amidst the showers of your anger, let the resplendent sun of favour evaporate your wrath, let the dew of thy patience so mol-

lily your cruelty, that I may at last reap that happiness I have so long desired.'

'Thalmo, said she, I now see thou art a servant to folly, and canst not be exempted till thy time of innocency is expired. I perceive it is in vain to dissuade, where senseless absurdity doth command; and it will be ineffectual, where I see exhortations are held as toys, and requests obey'd as trifles. I am sorry that I have remained with you so long, in respect thou art blinded with a frivolous humour; which I see springs rather from a fond understanding, than any way from a tormented spirit; but however, it nothing avails the advancement of thy demand, because unlawful, and therefore to be rejected.'

'Dear madam, reply'd Thalmo, if ever the sighs, tears, love, fidelity or affection of a tormented lover, may gain acceptance in the contemplation of his saint; I beseech you to grant me the accomplishment of my virtuous desires, that I may once in all chastity of marriage enjoy your sacred person, which above all the world I chiefly adore.'

The princess told him this talk disturbed her thoughts, and his speeches her senses; and so in a disdainful manner she flew from him: When directing her pace to the court, we will for a while there leave her, and a little discourse of Thalmo's passions: Who seeing the princess so suddenly departed, hereat immediately storm'd, changing his pleasant countenance to a pale complexion; and repenting the time that ever the queen

his mother produced him into this miserable world, continually crying out upon cruel destiny, and very often sighing, as tho' his breast were overwhelm'd with insupportable calamities; sometimes falling from sighs to tears, and then from tears to sighs again: Sometimes repeating the name of Athelia, and then closing up his eyes, as though the oracle of that celestial word has ravished his senses with too many divine cogitations: At last he very pensively withdrew himself to his closet, where to ease his tormented mind, he resolved to write, and send her these lines:

I never saw that face till now,
 that could my fancy move:
 I lik'd and ventur'd many a vow
 but durst not think of love:
 Till beauty charming every sense,
 an easy conquest made,
 And shew'd the vainness of defence,
 when Athelia doth invade.

But oh! her colder heart denies
 the thoughts her looks inspire;
 And while in ice that frozen lies,
 her eyes dart only fire.
 Between extreams I am undone,
 like plants to northward set;
 Burnt by too violent a sun,
 or starv'd for want of heat.

Which being ended, sealed up and directed, he hasted to a lady of the princess Athelia's, whose physiognomy promised the accomplishment of a faithful performance,
 and

and emboldened him to request her to deliver it to the princess, to which she voluntarily condescended; and so finding her very solitary in her chamber, sheweth an humble reverence effected her promise. The princess at first was unwilling to receive, as not knowing from whence it came, but unripping the seal, she found who it was sent it, and with a crimson blush commanded Levina her woman to depart; when locking her door, she cast herself on her dainty bed, and read the contents before repeated, many times she perus'd it, and often kist it, and at last utter'd to herself these passions.

' Most unfortunate Athelia! if thy tears might assuage thy pains, or the sighs thy miseries; thou mightest then envy thy tortures, and with patience bear the insupportable burthen of thy calamities: But alas! As the first cannot perform the one, nor the second effect the other; thou mayest esteem thy estate the more unfortunate, and curse the hour wherein thou didst espy that charming face of virtuous Thalgo, Thalgo: I say, whose valorous actions, heroical disposition, and comely deportment hath so conquer'd thy princely breast, that thou with the pale-fac'd moon, in clouds of obscurity, dost take thy pleasant light of hope from the resplendent sun, which is only Thalgo; remember with what fervency of affectionate fidelity he pleaded to thee for a kind acceptance; and call to mind the pearled tears, doleful sighs, and passionate agonies, which as messengers of a faithful constancy, he

sent to witness before thine eyes the miserie
he endur'd, and bury not in oblivion his war
complexion, hollow aspects and repining
despair; which as sollicitors, might have
caus'd the most obdurate heart to relent, and
have produc'd a motion of pity. But wretch-
ed Athelia! Forget not the proud repulses,
sharp answers, bitter threats, and obstinate
denials thou gavest his enterprize; which
when I consider, I burst with anger, and
condemn myself of imprudent ingratitude,
in rewarding his primitive presence with in-
humanity, and crossing the proceedings of
his hopes with unmerited inaffability. In-
deed, I must confess, relinquishing obstinate
coyness, my passion was then magnanimous
for Thalgo, altho' modesty would not per-
mit me to discover it; and now I do adore
him, as the sacred image to whom I pay all
my devotions. Thalgo, and none but him,
shall live in my remembrance, nor none but
him alone can boast of such a conquest; tho'
pride at first seem'd to reign in my breast,
when I refus'd his precepts, I will now be
as affable in accepting his affections; tho'
then pertinacious in denying his requests,
yet now as willing to agree to his petitions;
and tho' then refractory in not being atten-
tive to his desires, yet now as tractable to
hearken to his demands; but whither, A-
thelia, dost thou wander? What lunatick
folly doth possess thy senses? Or whither
runs thy wits a wandering without their
guide, discretion? Hath an amorous passion
so soon transported thy mind with fancies,

or

or lovely toys so instantly obscured thy reason with absurdity, that without regard to modesty, thou proclaimest thy simplicity, which should the world know it, thou wouldst be condemned of peevish levity? Is she which was so long courted, now become an oratory suitor? And must she plead to him for love who petition'd her for affection? Ah Athelia! But such is thy fate, and therefore contradict not that which the gods have already decreed: Satisfy thy self with what is contingent to thee; and hereafter seek by some favourable means to correspond with thy desir'd Thalgo, to the end that his presence may expel those mists of sorrow, which so intoxicate thy senses, and extinguish the birth of ardent flames, which begin to scorch the substance.'

Levina her woman suddenly rush'd in, as being sent from the queen her mother, wondering she should be so long absent; Athelia perceiving the time had deceiv'd her, instantly rose up, and clearing up, her countenance the best she could, sail'd not according to her duty, with all celerity to hasten to the queen, where contrary to her expectation, she received this check.

'Athelia hath too much freedom made you forget your self? Or is it some extraordinary affair which hath retained you so long from my presence? Was you with your tutress lady Florina, or from whence came you?'

'Madam, May it please your majesty, (reply'd the princess) I have long since been

invited to see the lady Fulvia's chamber, and this morning unexpected, she came for me, your majesty being in your closet, I was loath to disturb you, and so I departed without taking my leave, my lady Florina was then at her devotions, and so only Iffida my maid attended me.

Having spoke largely of Thalgo and Athelia, we shall now proceed to give some account of Palmo and Merfilva.

Palmo being appointed by king Brilion deputy-governour of Ithaca castle, wherein the beautiful Merfilva was kept prisoner; having his heart inspir'd with compassion, grievously troubled to see Porus his governour, so rigorously use her: For, whereas the king did allow her a decent chamber, pleasant walks, a table answerable to her person, and a damsel to attend her; he on the contrary abridged her of those privileges, placing her in an obscure dungeon; where the thought of so detestable a damp, might have hurried Alexander himself into a labyrinth of despair: For instead of pleasant walks, she had only the liberty of her close prison; her diet was very homely, and scarce enough to assist nature; and instead of a damsel to attend her, was basely served by an ugly ruffian, in the furrows of whose angry brows, envious wrath sat triumphant; having from his governour a strict order, to hinder all those, who in her distress should give her relief.

Merfilva perceiving her hard usage, exclaim'd on fortune, deploring that ever she had

had attained to so dismal an aspect ! Weep she might, for there was no spectators of her lamentation ; and well might she lament and cast forth sighs, for there was none to comfort her in the depth of her miseries : For if at any time she bemoaned herself to her rigorous keeper, with forcible arguments to induce him to pity, she was immediately check'd with a catalogue of reproaches ; alleging, that her entertainment exceeded her merits : Which as a second wound, did so transport her reason to compleat anguish, that with wringing hands and throbbing sighs, she to herself breath'd out these words.

‘ Perplex’d Merfilva ! Thou hast just occasion to acknowledge, how inconstant fortune, doth at her pleasure conduct princes to the top of prosperity ; and immediately turning the needle of her compass to another point, doth violently rend the bark of their pristine estate, against the dangerous rocks of perdition ; where suffering shipwreck, the memory of their happiness is presently over-whelm’d in the unmerciful entrails of tyrannizing destiny. Unfortunate Merfilva ! in that camelion tragedy, thou art a principal actress ; for the subject of thy misery, hath as a prologue mounted thee on the theatre of destruction ; most wretched Merfilva ! when the memory of thy birth pierceth through the thoughts of consideration ; and comparing past honours, to present calamities, what terror of aggravation it doth apply to thy hope, thou mayst well conjecture ;

ture; whereas others can scarcely pre-suppose.'

Which doleful words she uttered with such zealous fervency, that the report thereof, would have caused disdain herself, to have pitied her; for sometimes she walked in her miserable cottage, and then instantly threw herself on her bed of care, where drawing her curtains close about her, she might judge it to be a sepulchre, and herself a corps therein interred: When again, reviving her spirits and remembering her misery, she would sorrowfully smile, and instantly rebuke herself, for committing such an offence. Her handkerchief she often washed with tears, which trickled down her sorrowful cheeks, and then immediately dried them, with fanning wind on her face, to enliven her spirit: In which sorrowful manner she past the day, without being comforted by the assistance of any; until at last the sound of her complaint reach'd the ears of prince Plivio, which infused in him so much relentation, that knowing her to be a princess royally descended and innocently committed, without being guilty of any crime, against the crown or kingdom of Zanfara, he being vanquished with compassion, cried out:

'Cruel Plivio! can humanity suffer so beautiful a princess, as Mersilva to endure imprisonment, and thou enjoy thy liberty? or can the dignity of that divine sex, obtain no more favour at thy hands, where thou canst afford relief? Are thy senses so clouded
with

with obscurity, thy eyes so darkened with impiety, or thine heart so loaded with cruelty, that her tears cannot solícite to thee for her freedom ; or her complaints as advocates of her innocency, perfectly plead to thee for her speedy enlargement ? How will the world blame thee of ingratitude, thy conscience accuse thee of rigour, and thy thoughts condemn thee of tyranny when the odiousness of thy fact, shall arrive to the judgment-seat of reason ; where thy faults being described, and thy folly disclosed ? What shadow of argument canst thou alledge for thy excuse ? or what mask of sensibility canst thou produce to o'erveil thy inhumanity ? Consider with thy self from whence thou art extracted ; if from the loins of a woman, how comes it to pass, thou differest from so temperate a nature. Plivio ! recal thy senses to the throne of pity, and drown the rigorousness of thy mind in the gulf of oblivion : Let lenity be in thy thoughts, and remorse in thy cogitations ; and ungrateful Plivio, resolve, that to relieve the distressed is an operation of charity, and to assist an afflicted lady, is worthy commendation. What though thy governor is inhumane, must thou of consequence detest her ? No, Plivio, let not thy cruelty obscure thy liberality, nor perverse impiety overwhelm thy affability, but rather let thy actions favour of thy friendship, and let thy resolutions be qualify'd with generosity ; and in so doing, the gods will esteem it an act of justice, and
all

all mankind a glorious compassion to so much virtue.'

Upon the ground of which resolution, inciting his breast with the animosity of honour, he resolved to visit the princess Mer-silva. Whereupon, he immediately directed his course to the place where she sorrowfully lay imprisoned: Where he was no sooner entered, but he beheld her sitting on her bed of misery, having her face o'erveil'd with a sable scarf, as if she partly detested to see the appearance of delightful Phoebus; when not securely sleeping, but rather dolefully slumbering, being by his presence disturbed from her pensive contemplations, she forthwith raised herself from her seat of sorrow, and putting aside her scarf, discovered a perfect copy of transcendent beauty, from whence her radiant eyes, display'd their splendent influence as fixed stars, divinely seated in the celestial element, approaching to her with an humble reverence, he most courteously addressed himself in these words.

' Madam, I am at last arrived to your fair presence, to crave pardon for my neglect of duty in deferring so long that consolation I might have administer'd to you, since in this castle I can claim some privilege; but, dear madam, impute it not wholly to my want of care, for my governour's command was the main obstacle that kept me from prosecuting my intentions; which now being removed by his departure to the court, fortune has opportunely given me this happiness of waiting on you, and of
offering

offering all the civilities which this castle, or my interest can afford you ; therefore, madam, if you please to recreate yourself in the gardens and walks adjoining, I will attend you, and secure your sacred person from all harms and violence.'

The princess Mersilva wondering at this unexpected kindness, drying her chrystal cheeks with a vermillion blush, very courteously returned him this answer :

' Sir, my vanquish'd hope, which hath been transported to the very brink of despair, being now by your extraordinary favours, inspired with consolation, doth for this your kind relief, render you millions of thanks for this unmerited succour ; and since you are pleased to afford me that happiness, I should be very unworthy to you, and much wanting to myself, if I did not accept of so great a freedom, as to enjoy the air of the fragrant fields.

Plivio perceiving her inclination to walk and take the air, very courteously took her by the hand, and conducted her by a postern gate, through the castle, to the walks, and from thence to the pleasant arbours ; where Mersilva delighting to range from bank to bank, and from fountain to bower, leaving in a manner no place therein unprospected, she at last arrived to a very sumptuous fountain ; whose walls being of glittering alabaster, and shining marble, gave such a grace to Mersilva's eyes, that her spirits at so pleasant a prospect did then receive the long look'd for motion of delightful contentment :

At

At last hearing the descent of some issuing stream, which made a musical harmony in falling to the concavity of the earth, she began to trace round the circumference of the fountain, where she espied on the east side of it, two stately pillars of dove-white ivory, being very curiously carved and adorned with spacious guards of refin'd azure, wherein where enamelled lovely roses, and splendid stars of of artificial ingenuity ; on the tops of the pillars stood two female images, most industriously painted, well resembling the graces, each holding in their hands a little vane, where on one side was painted Minerva, and on the other Diana, and joining their other hands, which they elevated over their heads, did support the third grace, being crowned with an Olympian garland, holding in both her hands a table of celestial hue, seated in a frame of illustrious argent, from out whose six globy paps, resembling for whiteness the snow which doth embrace the Pyrenæan mountains, rushed forth chrystal spouts of silver water ; whereat she being for a while delighted, at last perceiv'd betwixt the two pillars a geometrical door, where entering, she beheld a small mountain in form of a pyramid, which reach'd to the top of the fountain, from whence nature yielded forth many a vein of weeping water, which by degrees distilling down the rock, was thorough silver pipes by art most curiously conveyed to the graces paps : Which Mersilva seeing, shut the door, and resolv'd to depart ; but by chance reflecting her sight,

as unwilling so soon to take her farewell, glancing her eyes at random upon the perfection of the upper grace, she, either deluded with a shadow, or possess'd with a fancy, immediately conceiv'd, that she saw her artificial eyes, naturally reflect in the model of their influence, and so being in imagination induc'd that it was so, or else that at the request of some second pygmalion, the goddess Venus had with life likewise inspir'd her; she thought with herself, that the said grace, by some means or other had interiorly some lively feeling of natural sense, and applying it as the allusion of her fancy drove her, conjectur'd, that she invited her more near to approach: In respect whereof mounted a step which stood very close before the graces, she thought with them, but especially the uppermost, to have some private conference; where being elevated, she presently forgot herself, as if some sacred deity had so before predestinated it, and after was instantly put in mind of her doleful calamities; whereat much lamenting, she blush'd, in that she had committed so stupid an absurdity; when looking about her, and not seeing Plivio there, espying a blue table, she lean'd upon it, and charmingly sung these lines:

The glories of our birth and state,
are shadows, not substantial things,
There is no armour against fate,
Death lays his icy hands on kings;

Scepters

Scepters and crowns
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal laid,
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
and plant fresh laurels where they kill ;
But their strong nerves at last must yield,
they tame but one another still :

Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
When the pale captive creeps to death.

The garland withers on your brow,
Then boast no more your mighty deeds ;
For upon death's purple altar now,
see where the victor victim bleeds :

All heads must come
To the cold tomb ;
Only the actions of the just,
Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.

We shall now leave Plivio and Mersilva,
and discourse of Medor and Florina.

Prince Medor, as you have formerly heard,
having acquired the love of the princess Flo-
rina, and grounded his affections in her me-
mory, was frustrated in the consummation
of his bliss by king Agenor, her father, who
utterly denied to match his daughter with
him, in respect of an ancient antipathy be-
tween prince Medor's father and himself.
So that perceiving he could not obtain his
desire, nor so much as confer with the prin-
cess Florina, by reason the king her father
had

had commanded her to retire into the country, he immediately resolved to travel, hoping that the influence of time would raze out the king's indignation; he at last determin'd to take a voyage to the isle of Madagascar, to pay his duty and service to his uncle, duke Alphonso; but yet, least departing without leave of the lady Florina should render him guilty of ingratitude, he at last with tears in his eyes writ these lines:

Medor, to the fair princess Florina.

MAdam, destiny resolving to metamorphose our pleasures into pensiveness, hath doubtless instigated the king your father to exercise his invective malice against our innocency; so that, dear madam, I am forced to leave behind me that transcendent pledge of my affection; live I cannot but in torment, being depriv'd of the sight of so much beauty; but such, madam, is my unfortunate fortune, and the gods in the synods of their resolutions have impos'd it as a period to commence my miseries; nay, more than so, I think ratified it for a plague to impale me within the circumference of endless disconsolation. But, madam, in what desolate place soever I erect my residence, my contemplations shall dwell upon the idea of your beauty, and my mind ruminate upon your divine perfections; and daily upon the altar of love I will sacrifice sighs, in testimonial of my immoveable affections; therefore, dear madam, be not dismay'd, for the gods

gods who have made this decree, may in time revoke their sentence ; so committing you to the protection of the powers divine, I remain madam, your constant servant till death,

MEDOR.

Which having ended, he deliver'd it to an intimate friend to convey to her ; and so finding a ship ready, he embark'd himself for Madagascar ; sometimes he was floating upon the proud billows, and pass'd by several ports and islands, and at last betwixt a bay and an island was overtaken by a cruel tempestuous storm, which continued a long time, and forced them into a port in Africa, where gaining the shore, and finding himself weak, through his marine sickness, he instantly resolv'd there to make his abode ; and so taking leave of the master, and bestowing his liberality upon the ship's company, he there betook himself to erect his residence ; till at last being advertis'd by a merchant, that the court of Zanzara was the rendezvous of the flower of chivalry, he determin'd thither to travel : In which journey, some few leagues from the court, by chance straying in a forest, and arriving to a solitary cottage, whose situation corresponded with his disturbed passions, he resolv'd there to make his habitation ; the better to pass away the doleful time, whilst absent from his fair Florina, and the better to cloud his secrets from the sight of neighbouring spectators, he disguis'd himself in a hermit's habit, seeming outwardly

outwardly to all passengers the chief inhabitant of that vestal grove; where forgetting his former dignity, and solacing himself with the remembrance of his fair Florina, he a long time liv'd as a man which had forsaken the alluring jollities of this inconstant world, devoting his soul to the only enjoying of celestial felicities. But love, which still inspir'd him with the beauty of his princess, would not so abandon this her amorous favourite, but so tyrannously furnish'd his mind with ardent flames of affection, that thinking to sleep, Cupid would permit Morpheus to entertainment; but forced him divers times to arise, and pourtract forth his passions in affirmation of his fidelity; and at last echo'd forth these verses:

Break, break distracted heart, there is no cure
For this thy soul's most desperate calenture;
Sighs which in others passions vent,
And give them ease when they lament,
Are but the billows to my hot desire,
And fears in me don't quench, but nourish fire:

Nothing can mollify my grief,

Or give my passion some relief.

Love's flames when smother'd, always do devour,

And when oppos'd by the same fatal power,
Then welcome death, let thy blest hands apply
A medicine to my grief, and then I'll die.

It were too tedious to relate all the passages of the austere life which prince Medor led in this solitary grove, therefore let this suffice:

suffice : That being vanquish'd with ardent affection, he finally vowed to devote the pilgrimage of his days to Florina's service, and protested to adore her as the sacred deity to whom he dedicated the generality of his terrestrial devotions. Therefore leaving him to his disconsolateness to be reliev'd by patience, we will return to prince Thalmo, and his princess the fair Athelia.

Prince Thalmo perceiving the fair Athelia to be always devoted to cruelty, and concluding with himself, that she triumph'd over his martyrdom, being overcome with love and loaded with affection; could reap no rest of his senses, until he had a prospect of her singular beauty ; she being in the next arbour, he address'd himself to her, after a small complement, and said :

‘ Madam, the nature of planets is to have each his influence, and it being my fortune to be planet-struck with that excelling beauty which you possess, I am now come to the divine oracle to learn whether I shall be happy or miserable.’

Athelia surpriz'd to see Thalmo present ; yet shadowing her affection under the protection of nicety, with a little redness said : ‘ Thalmo, if planets have power to form civility, then I hope your old folly is metamorphos'd to new discretion : For my part I am what I profess'd, and if you approve of it, as you came unlook'd for, so when you please you may depart.’

‘ Why madam ! reply'd Thalmo, so harsh a sentence ? Should I which have been faithful

ful to you, even from the birth of your first aspect, become now your deity inconstant; or would you admise me to transform my fore-past affection into future hatred.' 'Thy hatred, said Athelia, doth more please me than thy affection, and yet I care little for both, and for thyself less.' Thalgo being ready to answer her, was prevented by Levina her gentlewoman, who came on purpose to attend her; the which as soon as he espy'd, with a very low bow and a sorrowful resolution he departed, raging against Cupid for predestinating him to serve so cruel a tyrannizing beauty; when walking a-part in a private place he espy'd his fair Athelia to direct her course to the court. Upon which he re-enter'd the harbour, where she was, and looking round him, he observ'd the turtles in their amours; upon which seating himself, he breath'd out these verses.

Observe these turtles kind and true;
Hearken how frequently they woo;
They faithful lovers are, and true;
If they that see 'em would but be so too.
Of them, my fair Athelia, learn,
At length to grant me my concern:
Follow what thou in them dost see,
And thou wilt soon be kind to me.

Having thus vented himself, and seeing his fair Athelia absent, he at last thinking to find her in her closet; where very pensively entering, and not seeing her there, immediately directed his way to the court; where
he

he was no sooner arrived, but a page meets him, and delivers him this message and challenge. ' Sir, prince Almion, my master, hearing of the affection you bear to the princess Athelia, whose beauty those that pretend to it, must dispute it in the field of honour, and to that end hath sent thee this resolute defiance, which I here deliver to thee : ' Which Thalmio opening, it contained these words.

Almion to Thalmio.

PRoudest Arabian, being acquainted with thy aspiring affections towards the lady Athelia, whom the world knows none can lay claim to so high a favour but myself, and by reason my courage disdains to digest so unpleasing a disgrace, I have sent you this defiance, to meet me single in the castle-trench after dinner, there to dispute it with thy sword ; where I will severely chastise thy insolence in crossing my affections, and make thee sensible, that in all things thou hast abus'd thy superiour.

Almion.

Thalmio wondering at this unexpected news, and disdaining to be out-brav'd by a Zanzarian prince, by his own page return'd this.

The Answer.

Understanding by your defiance, that for my duty I pay to the lady Athelia, you have assum'd that title of being my school-master,

master, to correct me for that which yourself cannot avoid ; my nature is such, that I desire to live no longer, than to be depriv'd of the beauty of the fair Athelia : At the time and place appointed, my sword shall demonstrate that my affection is such to Athelia, that whilst here, I will live and die in her service ; and neither thy valour, nor fear of death, shall raze her idea out of my memory.

Thalmo.

The hour being come, Thalmo according to his promise fail'd not to present himself ; where instead of meeting his rival Almion, he was treacherously encountered by a crew of desperate ruffians who were there by Almion plac'd in an ambuscade to murder him, who seeing they so fiercely approached him, instantly began to put himself in a posture of defence to receive their fury ; where with a great courage he dealt such gallant blows among them, that at first, not able to endure his valour, they were forced to retreat : But after re-assuming their strength, they very courageously flew upon him, where they so manfully behav'd themselves, that Thalmo not able to withstand their force, was glad to retire, and take the castle-wall for his defence ; where he so valiantly behav'd himself, that for recompence of their treachery, he made many of them bear the weight, and undergo the sharpness of his Sicilian sword : But in short, their force bearing sway, and their number masterless, he unfortunately received many dangerous

dangerous wounds, from whence issued out abundance of blood, that finding his body weak, and feeling his senses fail him, thinking there was no way but death, falling to the ground, and gasping as he thought his last, he in memory of his dear Athelia breathed out these words : ‘ Let my blood testify how well I loved Athelia, and retained constant even to the last.’

Thalmo had no sooner uttered these words, but prince Plivio being slumbering behind a bank next adjoining, hearing the name of Athelia repeated, immediately started up, and seeing the prince his cousin to be in danger amongst these ruffians, instantly stept into his assistance ; where making way with his sword, he lifted him on his feet, and so desiring him to be of good courage, flew to his adversaries, where he distributed such valorous strokes amongst them, that in short some fled, and the rest being vanquish’d, he triumphantly remain’d conqueror ; which was no sooner finish’d, but using his best art and industry, bound up his cousin’s wounds, and convey’d him to a skilful chirurgeon there next adjoining, commanding him to dress him with all care imaginable ; whereupon taking horse, he speedily posted to the court, and inform’d the princess Athelia, of the sorrowful news ; which when she heard, immediately fell in a trance. Plivio beholding this unexpected accident, and wanting an expedient, summon’d his senses in their proper order, and employed his utmost diligence for the lady’s recovery ;
which

which he very soon effected, begging her to be of good comfort, for that there was no doubt to be made of Thalmos health. The princess being therewith a little qualified, for a while appeas'd herself; yet continu'd weeping for his misery, being sensible it was her affection which induced him to so hazardous an enterprize: But thinking how to demean herself in so tragical an event at last shedding many tears, she resolv'd by his friend Plivio to send a few lines, as a manifestation of her affection, and as an unguent preservative to his wounds; so calling for pen and paper, she wrote to this effect.

Athelia to Thalmos.

THalmo, the heavy news of thy misfortune has implored my affection to put pen to paper; and hath so overwhelm'd my senses with grief, that there is almost no words herein contained, but hath been wash'd with a tear, nor no syllable but hath been saluted with a sigh: Yet since it is none but Athelia is the original of thy misfortune, I will to the utmost of my power recompence thy affections: So recommending my sorrows to your favourable censure, I unfeignedly am yours as her own.

Athelia.

Thalmos receiving the letter from prince Plivio, found now by experience, that the distemper of the mind far exceeds that of the body; for it wrought such miracles upon
D his

his cure, that in few days he was perfectly recover'd; and contemplating upon that favourable epistle which his dear Athelia had sent him, and not to be guilty of so high an ingratitude in not returning an answer, he enforcing himself to sit up; writ her these lines.

Thalmo to the fair Athelia.

MAdam, the honour you were pleased to afford to your unworthy servant, has wrought such wonders upon my distemper, that no other physician but your yourself could have effected such a cure, the vertue thereof being so well applied, that the powerful charm had its full operation: Therefore, madam, on the idea of your divine perfections will I for ever fix my memory, and exercise my contemplations upon your matchless beauty; never forgetting my kind preserver, but will continually offer up millions of thanks for the receipt of so great a blessing, and unfeignedly remain,

Yours now and ever,

Thalmo. T

The princess Athelia receiving the letter, was much pleas'd with the news of Thalmo's recovery, yet could not be satisfied with that copy of the letter without seeing the original hand that writ it; so that at last finding any opportunity, when the king and queen herith parents were absent, taking Levina with her, she instantly went to the lodge, where she

ly she was advertised Thalgo was resident ;
being conducted to his chamber, she beheld
Thalgo very pensively walking alone, ha-
ving his arm pinn'd up in a scarf ; he no
sooner espy'd the princess Athalia, but was
transported beyond measure, and forthwith
embrac'd and kiis'd her hands ; their eyes
like piercing aspects attracted each others
sight, that like ambassadors of love they
seem'd to ratify a mutual alliance : Their
tongues were silent for a while, till at last
an amorous blush had given leave to so plea-
sing an encounter, Athalia utter'd these
words :

‘ Thalgo, You may wonder at my un-
expected arrival, and yet you may imagine
the news of your misfortune led me hither,
and not to keep you any longer in suspense,
I am now come in some measure to retaliate
your affection, tho' indeed before I thought
it not convenient to take it so soon in con-
sideration ; but since the gods have so de-
creed it, there is no resisting the divine
powers ; therefore you may place your hap-
piness where your kind stars directs you.’

Thalgo hearing this celestial lecture, per-
ceived by the fervency of her words that she
lov'd no more than love did induce her ;
very softly taking of her by her snowy hand,
turn'd her this obliging answer :

‘ Madam, your words have so much divi-
nity in themselves, that they carry a power
with 'em, to whom they are directed ; and
with a high cordial to afflicted spirits ; the
operation hath caused my breast to triumph

over my sickness, which heretofore I believed would not only have conquered my mind, but also cut off the thread of my life; therefore welcome, dear madam, to your sorrowful Thalgo, and millions of thanks to kind fortune, for investing mine eyes with so heavenly an object! But whether wander my senses, that I forget my self so much, as not to gratify your Love with reciprocal affection? But pardon me, dear madam, and attribute the defects of my reason to the distemper of my weakness; for I resolve that both now and ever to honour and adore as the eternal goddess of my prosperity; and esteem you as the sacred image of my felicity.

To which Athelia answered, ‘ Prince Thalgo, where there is no offence committed, by consequence the excuse ceaseth. Thy actions having cleared from imputation, be not timorous for thy pardon is sealed: Therefore advance in love, and I will prosecute in affection; proceed in amity and I will correspond in friendship: For approbation of which take here my heart and hand as the steadfast seal of immortal constancy; vowing before the imperial throne of heaven, to establish only Thalgo for my lord and husband.’

Thalgo esteeming himself exceeding fortunate with this angelical reply, and in congratulation of her protested amity, returned her this answer.

‘ Madam, your sincere affection created in me such raptures, and has so great an influence

fluence over all my senses, that in retaliation I vow not only to dedicate my zealous devotions to so beautiful a shrine, but also resolve to remain for ever your loyal servant.'

With many amorous ceremonies they firmly contracted themselves; and in such an affectionate manner, that neither the frowns of fortune, or treachery of time, or the flattery of insinuation, could either blast their flourishing friendship; or once daunt their immoveable fidelity: So that having brought this happy couple to a sacred union, we will for a while leave them, and discourse of the strange accidents which beset the lady Florina.

Florina living very sorrowful in her desolate castle, was at last by king Agenor her father, commanded to court without any delay; whereat being exceedingly discontented, in respect it would hinder devotions due to prince Medor; and being a faithful admirer of his perfections, utterly refus'd thereunto to condescend. The king being inform'd of her obstinacy, immediately sent forth messengers to force her to the court: But she being before acquainted with it, consulted with herself how to avoid her father's indignation. At last knowing no other means for her escape, to shelter herself under some peasant's cottage, so laying aside her princely extraction and grandeur, she pursu'd her intended purpose: So that reaping an exceeding delight, to see the homely shepherds lead their milk-white flocks to the fragrant fields, and to hear divers choirs of

harmonious birds chanting forth their pleasant notes ; she remained there a long time as well contented, as a lady in her estate could contain herself, which was oppress'd in love : till on a day bearing a shepherdess company to the fields, directly in the close of the evening, when the golden sun was declining and leaving the horizon to give light to our antipodes, and the pale-fac'd silver moon gave notice to pilgrims of their repose ; as these our two females were returning from folding their flocks, Florina hiding herself under the canopy of a sprouting fig-tree, sung with an excellent voice these lines :

Hence Cupid with your cheating toys,
 Your real griefs and painted joys.
 Your pleasures which itself destroys,
 Love, like men in fevers burn and rave,
 And only what ensures them does deceive :
 Man's weakness makes love so severe,
 They give them power by their fear,
 And make the shackles which they wear.
 Who to another do's his heart submit,
 Makes his own idol, and does worship it.
 Him whose heart is all his own,
 Peace and liberty does crown,
 He apprehends no killing frown ;
 Feels no raptures which are joys diseas'd,
 And is not much transported, but still pleas'd

The shepherdess seeing Florina had now ended, entreated her to repair home ; they had not long tript over the diaper'd fields

but they beheld a very young stripling, which hastily drew towards them, who being almost out of breath with running, to the lady Florina brought this message.

‘ Madam, I am on purpose sent to beg you instantly to hide yourselves in some secret grove ; for there are arriv’d to our cottage, four or five, which come in search for you, and have very much wounded my father for concealing you : Therefore make no delay, madam, if you value your own preservation ; and since the laws of nature and humanity obliges me to aid all ladies in affliction, I will, if you please, conduct you with safety through the woods and vineyards, where I doubt not but you may remain with most assur’d privacy.

Florina wondering at her father’s cruelty, yet pleas’d at the shepherd’s civility, pondering with herself which way to wander in this exigency ; at last following the youth’s advice, she desir’d the shepherdess to bear her company, so directing their course to the sea-side, which in two days they attain’d, without being espy’d of any : But they were no sooner arriv’d to a harbouring town, but they were inform’d, that there was likewise search made for her apprehension ; whereat being almost over-whelm’d with passion, and vanquish’d with affection, they immediately left the town, and cross’d the strand : tracing upon the borders of the sea, they arriv’d to a little creek, where espying an aged fisherman in his cock-boat, repairing his nets, having given him the time of

the day, asked him, If he would, for recreation, transport them a league on the sea? The fisherman demanding a recompence, they thereunto agreed; so with a merry gale, which blew the sail from the bending mast, they put to sea, where delighting to see the old man take store of fish, and to feel the boat dance on the azur'd seas; in this manner they pass'd away the time, till night gave them a summons to return: But before Florina reach'd the shore, she demonstrated her estate to the fisherman, and begg'd him with tears in her eyes, to assist her in this her miserable distress, and for her safety to convey her every day on the sea. The old man pitying her estate, and being instigated by her liberality, soon to her so reasonable a request, voluntarily condescended: Which course they many days observed, with as much joy to Florina, as if she had now been triumphing in her former dignity; till at last fortune resolving to add more misery to her afflictions, caused her, very unexpectedly, for to fall within the labyrinth of a greater misfortune; for they so long time daily went to sea, till at length, being two leagues from the shore, they were espy'd by a pinnace, which ranged close along by the cliffs, to trap some purchase, who hoisting their sails, came directly towards them; and so making speedy way, did very soon cut their boat from the shore, commanding them to the main; which doleful sentence, alarm'd our weak company, and made them almost die with grief, to think on their disastrous calamity;

calamity ; but especially the lady Florina, from whose eyes distill'd many pearled tears, which as the perfect messengers of sorrow, did apparently demonstrate her insupportable grief ; but all, alas ! in vain, for there was no remedy to assist her, nor no undaunted Alcides near hand to rescue her from their cruelty ; but they were very rigorously commanded to come aboard ; which with a faint courage, and sorrowful resolution, they effected, Florina being the last that enter'd, whom the turkish slaves no sooner beheld, but casting their eyes upon angelical beauty, clapping their hands, and throwing up their caps ; being glad they had got so glorious a prize to present their sultan. The comfortless Florina hanging down her head with despair, thought she was now on the stage, where the catastrophe of her tragedy should be acted.

But the captain of this cursed crew, discreetly beholding her beauty, did from the influence of her constant eyes, and modest aspect, conceive she was a virtuous person, and of great extraction ; in respect whereof, he discharged the rest, and retain'd only perplex'd Florina, which he commanded to be entertained with all respect and favour imaginable ; and the better to effect it, he forsook his cabin, and lodg'd her in it, charging his page to attend her with as great diligence, as on his own person ; so that Florina might perceive, that as they entertain'd her with that civility, so they likewise honoured her, by never attempting

to violate her chastity, which she a thousand times esteem'd more dear than her life : But again remembering prince Medor, she would weep, as if his absent idea had a regal prerogative to create her tears ; many bitter sighs she likewise eccho'd forth, and blam'd the unfortunate fates for investing her with this disastrous accident. In her contemplation, she ruminated upon his perfections ; but again pondering upon his absence, and her own present misery, she would forthwith burst into publick exclamations, cursing the inhuman destinies for investing her breast with such an aggravation. Which the captain perceiving, began most affectionately to comfort her despairing courage ; adding moreover, with the industrious art of his fluent rhetorick, that no improbius or malevolent proceedings should be exercised against her, but such respect should be paid her as was equivalent to her virtue. But alas, Florina not minding his words, could reap no benefit by the anagram of his speeches, but still most bitterly bewail'd her misfortune, lying prostrate in her cell of misery ; where leaving her with the captain of the pinnacle, who resolv'd to transport her to Constantinople, we will commit her to the favourable occurrence of fortune, and return to the two princes.

Our two princes having apparent proofs of each others affection, and burning with desire to set forward their enterprizes, instantly appointed the next night following at the outer gate, betwixt twelve and one, they would

would attend the happy arrivals of their dear princesses; at whose glorious appearance our two princes advanc'd, and saluted them; no words could they utter, because their tongues, by the power of love, were devoted to silence, but all that pass'd were volleys of sighs; which redoubling, each other strove which should first unite each others heart with the sympathy of affection. But in short, and in a moment, they heard in the palace a great noise, as if all the court had been in an uproar; which so amazed them, that they knew not how to save themselves, nor where to convey their ladies: till at last Thalgo knowing their estate desperate, and perceiving it now behoved him to cast at all, either to lose his own life, or his dear Athelia, whom he esteem'd far more precious; reassuming his courage, he to his trembling associates said as followeth.

' Prince Plivio, this is no time for us to dally with, therefore with undaunted courage lead forth your lady, and if any presume to stop your passage, instantly sheath your sword in the perfidious slave's breast; and without prolixity send his servile soul to the common-wealth of Pluto, for a meritorious sacrifice: And you, illustrious ladies, fear nothing, for your virtues are a sufficient bulwark for your preservation.'

Which said, they went hand in hand, without finding any to resist 'em, and finding the porter in his lodge asleep, privately took from him the keys of the palace; when unbolting the outward gate, they without making

making any noise issued forth, and they enter the forest, directing their way to the cottage; where they no sooner arriv'd, but thinking to find some shepherdes, instead thereof, beheld a very beautiful young man, who seemed to be overcome with grief, sitting very sorrowfully slumbering on a green bank, having a book, pen, ink, and paper close by him; and hearing the sound of their voices, he rousing up his spirits, came and saluted them in this manner:

‘Renowned knights, and fair ladies: admire not at my sorrows, nor wonder at my disconsolateness, for it is powerful fortune which hath invested me with this miserable calamity; but to extirpate his tyranny, and to triumph over his usurpation, I have here solitarily retir'd myself to this grove, to live, altho' not so well contented as I could wish, yet so well pleas'd as one in my estate can receive; my rural cottage affords no dainties, but poverty; yet such as it is, if you please to accept, I shall render myself most fortunate, and in whatever it comes short of your expectation, I will supply in freeness of service and thanks.

Which was no sooner pronounc'd, but the stranger taking the two ladies by the hands, requested them, and the two princes to enter his hermitage; where he presented them with a banquet of dry'd figs, dates, and apricocks, with other fruits, as that country did afford; which being ended, he ask'd the ladies if they would please to recreate themselves in the garden, where they
were

were no sooner arriv'd, but the two princesses after having view'd the odoriferous flowers, betook themselves to the bowers, where their beloved princes with divine salutes and compliments, congratulated them their happy welcome : the stranger viewing their innocent familiarity, immediately wept, as if those heavenly objects had some regal prerogative to command his tears ; but to drive away his sorrows which his passion had created, he went to his cottage, and returning speedily, brought with him an harmonious lute ; the which, after having tun'd, joining his excellent voice, he sung these lines.

Wake all ye dead, what ho ! what ho !
How soundly they sleep whose pillows lie low :
They mind not poor lovers that walk above,
On the decks of the world, in storms of love ;
No whispering now, nor glance can pass,
Thro' wicket or thro' panes of glass :
The windows and doors are shut up and
barr'd,
They lie close in the church and in the
church-yard :

In every grave make room, make room,
The world's at an end and I come, I come.

The state is now love's foe, love's foe,
Has seiz'd on his arms, his quiver and his bow,
He has pinion'd his wings and fetter'd his feet,
Because he made way for poor lovers to meet.
But oh sad fate ! his judge was old,
Hearts cruel are when blood grows cold.

No man being young, his process could draw,
Oh heav'ns that love should be subject to law.

Let lovers go woo the dead, the dead,
Lie two in a grave, and two in a bed.

No sooner had he ended these lines, but he instantly began afresh to weep, and so determining to assuage his sorrows, with a compliment he presently departed, walking a distance from them in a fair summer-house; the which our royal couples perceiving, began immediately to surmise that he was in love with some cruel lady, whose rigorous repulse was the motive of his passion; but pondering on his grief by their own sorrows, and his disconsolateness by their own late distemper, they all bewail'd his misfortune, and compassionated his affliction; lamenting that ever their arrival should renew his grief, or bring that afresh into his memory which proved his torment. At length Athelia and Merfilva rose up, which Thalmeno and Palmo no sooner perceiv'd, but they followed them; where passing along by a stately pine-tree, they upon the bark thereof espy'd some characters to be curiously carv'd, and approaching near, they read these words.

[The idea of Florina shall never depart my memory.]

Which characters perusing, and pondering what the lady therein mention'd might be, they immediately went and advertis'd Thalmeno and Palmo, who were walking at some distance, who not a little admiring to hear the name of Florina there decypher-
ed,

ed, began to conjecture that he might be prince Medor : in respect whereof, to satisfy their ardent desire, they with their ladies went towards him, where being entered the bower, Thalmeno deliver'd himself in these words.

‘ Sir, I beseech you in friendship to certify to me, whether you are acquainted with the princess Florina, daughter unto the king of Numidia, and also whether you know prince Medor, son unto the king of Biafara.’

The stranger no sooner heard pronounced the sacred name of Florina, but he instantly fell to the ground ; when closing his eyes, one would have thought he resolv'd as then to take his farewell of the world ; the which our princesses no sooner beheld, but they so employed their best skill, that in a short time he recover'd ; and raising himself, he in a sighing manner breath'd out these words.

‘ Ah Florina ! whose name infuseth life to my weak senses ; then fetching a deep sigh, said, ‘ Most generous knights and beautiful ladies, I have had the happiness to be acquainted with the princess Florina, and am that unfortunate Medor which you enquire for ; unfortunate I may well declare, in being absent from Florina ; the memory of divine beauty hath this many months been the goddess of my devotions ; therefore I beseech you, if you can give me any information of that worthy person, I would beg you in all humanity to ease my mind ; and
to

to congratulate your civility, I will for ever remain your affectionate servant.'

To which Thalmeno reply'd, ' Prince Medor, as you have with that civility received us, so I will no longer conceal from you those which are your debtors; I am Thalmeno, son and heir to the king of Cicilia, and the prince my cousin, son to the king of Egypt; who some two years since resolved to travel, having departed from my father's court, directing our course to Africa, and journeying three days alone, being destitute of a guide, and unskilful of the country, by misfortune stray'd into an unknown desert; but fortune willing to intermix our bitter sorrows with some pleasures, conducted us fortunately to a beautiful castle, which entering, we found the princess Florina thereof the desolate inhabitant, who having forsaken her father's court, vow'd to remain, until the joyful return of your princely self; therefore prince Medor, if you please to honour us with your good company, we are bound for Cicilia, and immediately upon our arrivals, with leave of the powers divine, we will conduct you to the melancholy place of her solitary retirement.'

Prince Medor being very well pleased with this fortunate news, very freely accepted of their proffer, and promised to accompany them; and with so chearful a countenance, that in his mortiferous spirit it seem'd the absent idea of Florina had infused exact vitality; but at last fixing his eyes
upon

upon the sweet object of the ladies beauty, and pondering on his divine Florina, he earnestly demanded of Thalmeno who those beautiful ladies were, and what private occasion induced them to travel; who related to him the whole circumstance of their proceedings, and their desire to travel to Cicilia: He thereupon having complimented them in a very high manner, voluntarily proffered to conduct them through the vineyards, and champion countries to the seaside; the princes and ladies being very well pleased, prepared instantly to depart, where they were no sooner arriv'd, but prince Medor very fortunately met with a ship of war of Madagascar, which belonging to duke Alphonso his uncle, was by tempestuous weather and contrary winds forc'd there to take harbour. Glad of this unexpected opportunity, they immediately contracted a bargain with the master for their passage, and with a favourable wind they sail'd for Cicilia. They remained so long on the seas, that after many tempestuous storms, they at last safely attain'd Gibraltar, the entrance of the Mediterranean streights; and so with joy keeping on their course for the desir'd island of Cicilia, they were towards night very quietly becalmed, in such a manner, that their ship made no way, but only floated upon the face of Neptune, according as the slackness of the current drove her; so that at last keeping good watch, as the third glass was in election to be finished, the master walking aloft upon the spare deck, heard
the

the noise of oars plowing in the entrails of Thetis ; whereat resolving to prevent the worst, he mounted the main shrouds, directing still his eyes by his ears, so long, till at last he espy'd a very stout galley swiftly making towards them ; at which unlook'd for accident, he with his silver whistle alarm'd the whole company in the ship, who quitting their hammocks, mounted the upper deck, admiring exceedingly what this unaccustom'd accident meant ; but the master shewing them the occasion, they instantly with heroical resolutions, fetch'd forth their muskets, and provided all things which might be any ways necessary for a combat ; amongst the rest, the master gunner burning with desire to shew some experience of his praise-worthy art, requested the captain to permit him to make a shot or two towards them ; whereat condescending, a couple of half pieces of ordnance were provided, and discharged off with such fury, that it not only made a massacre amongst the miserable slaves, but also at so sudden a motion made the commanders themselves tremble, in such a manner, as forced them to pull in their oars, let down their sails, and to stand upon their guard ; which the master perceiving, and knowing they would linger till the next day, having appointed each his place, and in his absence gave the chief officers their charge, he immediately went down to the cabin, to comfort our almost comfortless lovers, who alas ! lay in a posture of despair ; for they no sooner heard the report of the
shot,

shot, but they generally thought it came from some near harbouring enemy; they were all in an extasy of sorrow, blaming fortune for her frowns, and exclaiming against their miseries: Which the master perceiving, comforted them in the best manner he could, and advis'd them to be chearful; adding moreover, that there was no danger, and in the morning he did not doubt of being conqueror; whereupon our three princes comforted their two sorrowful ladies, who began to doubt of their own, and the princes safeties; which created many tears that distilled down their cheeks; which our princes perceiving, and being very eager to purchase their freedom, solemnly departed the cabin, and thrust themselves amongst the mariners, whom most couragiously they animated with such exhortation, that they generally protested to sacrifice their lives, for the establishing of their tranquilities. So that when night was expired, and day began to draw near, our masters and princes so ordered their affairs, that the flags and streamers were abroad playing with the wind, and all things ready in their proper order; the master upon the poop with his silver sword, to wheafe them to the leeward, and the trumpets ready at the beck, to sound the first onset: On the contrary part, the galley sported herself in the pride of her warlike jollity, and with a valorus resolution came towards them; when instantly the wind began to blow afresh, our master, by the consent of the three princes, went by their short
fails

sails within cannon-shot, resolving to attend their coming, and with honour to fight it out: The which the galley slaves perceiving, began to cry, *Victoria*, thinking that they had already yielded. But, alas! they were deceived of their hopes; for thinking to board them, the ship in a moment poured in her small shot, as thick as hail, and therewithal gave such a broad-side, which in the galley made such a rattling thunder, that their rails, penets, yea, hatches, and all began to advance to the skies: There might you have seen some dangerously wounded, which lay gasping their last; some already slain, imbruing themselves in their fellows blood? and some, whose heads flying from their bodies, went to advertise their friends of their woful tragedies.

The captain and commanders of the galley, raging at the unexpectedness of receiving so hot an entertainment, disdaining to die in their debts, bad their gunners give fire; where betwixt them was so furious a fight, that it was hard to judge on which side victory would incline: But when the fatal day was almost finished, wherein many had lost their lives, the galley most dangerously received such a shot between wind and water, that all within it made a hideous cry; which our princes understanding, instantly conceived some hopes of a victory; whereupon they afresh let fire their cannon, which made such breaches in the galley, that they seeing no hope whereon to rely, immediately yielded: Which our princes
and

company perceiving, for sudden joy gave a great shout for the conquest of so famous a victory; when instantly they hoisted out their shallop, and were in great parley, which of them should go commander: Thalmeno he willingly offer'd his service, and Palmo he vow'd not to stay behind; but prince Medor, seeing his associates in contention step'd in, and furiously protested they should both stay with their ladies, for he would only go master of the ship. They hearing of his voluntary resolution, gave sentence he should: Whereupon, with a noise of trumpets, away went prince Medor, and Thalmeno and Palmo returned down to the cabin, where their ladies came reciprocally to congratulate them of their great and fortunate victory; where so joyful a meeting betwixt them was demonstrated, that their minds, which before swam in the ocean of despair, did now float upon the waves of pleasantness; for their pale complexions were metamorpho'sd to cherry countenances; and their mournful eyes which were almost drowned in tears, did now clear up with vivacity; and in short, all receiv'd such satisfaction, as my abrupt pen cannot delineate. Prince Medor being now near the galley, at last very resolutely eter'd with his men, without finding any opposition; who seeing they were all hid, by sound of trumpet commanded their appearance, who came forth in a trembling manner, and seeing their enemies with their swords drawn, immediately fell on their faces and desired
pardon:

pardon: Upon which submission, prince Medor commanded his men, that upon pain of death, not to hurt them, either in body or goods: Which the captain understanding, came forth and beg'd his life, which prince Medor instantly granted: Whereupon after he was inform'd whence the galley came, and to whom it belong'd, he to the prince address'd himself in these words:

‘ Although it grieves me, courageous knight, to be conquer'd by any, yet since my fortune must needs endure the frowns of war, I rejoyce in my happiness to become tributary to so worthy a person; therefore, noble sir, since you have with such heroical voluntariness spared our lives, I must acquaint you, that within this next cabin, there is resident a virtuous lady, whom fortune hath made our prisoner; her extraction I know not, but if outward deportment does describe inward qualities, I presume she is some person of noble descent; her behaviour, though in adversity, is such that as she carries her perplexity with a modest countenance, so she disdains to render herself tributary to the infidelity of fortune.’

Prince Medor no sooner understood this unexpected news, but burning with desire to know what this lady might be, very friendly commanded the captain to bring him to her presence; where he was no sooner arrived, but he beheld this doleful lady imbathing herself in tears, lying prostrate on the ground with her visage over-veil'd, and being as it were in a lethargy; thinking that
the

the first that entered was the harbinger of death, and the inhumane instrument of her untimely martyrdom : But behold it fell out otherwise ; for when she expected he would sheath his sword in her innocent breast, why even then he took her by the lilly hand, and with an amiable voice uttered these words.

‘ Arise, fair lady ! for your life and liberty is granted you : Whereupon in a moment, as being acquainted with the voice, she started, and perceived it was prince Medor which pronounced that welcome sentence, being transported with an extraordinary passion, she fell into a trance. Prince Medor perceiving this tragical unexpected accident, failed not to employ his best endeavours for her recovery : and so thinking to raise her up, by chance the veil falling from her beautiful face, he perceived it to be his fair Florina ; but being astonish’d, he doubted the sincerity of his eyes, whilst a second survey of her person confirm’d his belief, and finding her to be essentially his unlook’d for Florina, with a swift resolution advancing his pace, he with open arms went and embrac’d her ; where so delightful a meeting was betwixt them demonstrated that from so pleasing a solace it was meer sacrilege to separate them : Prince Medor reflecting upon the divine-object of Florina’s beauty, he so found his mind devoted to silence, that the review of her cherry countenance wrapped up his senses in an extasy of contentation, which forc’d him into a trance ; the which Florina perceiving, melting

ing as it were into tears of sorrow, with her fair hands began to corroborate his temples; so that her sovereign breath infusing vitality to his sickly senses, made him again reassume his wonted courage, when inviting his wandering tongue to display the secrets of his wavering mind, taking Florina by her alabaster hand, he pronounc'd these words :

‘ Dear Florina, might I finish my days in thy embraces, or now sacrifice the remainder of my life before thy divine deity, I should not only account myself favour’d of the saints in affording me such good fortune, but also esteem my enterprizes more than happy, in being ratify’d by the synod of the gods themselves; but dear Florina, since the blessed sight of thy heavenly self hath so freed me from the chains of bondage, and from the fetters of despair, I here present you with my service, constancy, and fidelity; and as I have long since dedicated myself to your divine beauty, so I resolve to live and die your faithful, and never wavering servant to the end,

MEDOR.

Which heavenly speeches Florina no sooner heard, but over-shadowing her lilly cheeks with a crimson die; having im bath’d her tender mind in love, and her resolutions in affection, she in her delicate hand taking her handkerchief to wipe away those pearled tears from her lovely countenance, with an amiable

amiable yet sorrowful voice, she return'd him this answer :

Dear prince Medor, were I acquainted with that friendly god which ratified thy freedom, or with that favourable saint which re-conducted thee to my presence ; my sincere congratulation should display itself with what constancy I attended your coming, and now with what amity I honour thy arrival ; therefore welcome dear prince to thy sorrowful Florina, and millions of thanks to gracious Mars for investing me captive to so fortunate a conqueror. Since thy departure I have lived most comfortless, yet enjoying once more thy presence, I now bury the memory of all former griefs in the grave of oblivion ; invincible affection hath so captivated my spirits, and conquered my senses, that only I now live to respect dear Medor, and in spite of all fortune's effects, resolve to die in the league of his desired friendship.

The prince pondering upon her affectionate words, not able to contain such ardent expressions, cry'd out, ' Ah dear Florina ! whose sight infuses vitality to my amazing senses ; banish now from thy breast the memory of sorrow, and let contentment flourish in thy mind ; for now before the shrine of thy sacred self, upon the altar of fidelity, Medor presents thee with so compleat a portion of undaunted friendship, as you can any ways desire, or the gods

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distribute ;

distribute ; and dear Florina, since fortune hath so ordain'd it, that now contrary to my expectation, you are made my happy prisoner, know emprefs of my thoughts, and angel of my imaginations, that in most honourable company I am bound for Cicilia, where as soon as arrive, I will most willingly solemnize our nuptials, and ratify my beautiful Florina to be the sole governess of my breast's expectations.

Florina no sooner heard the harmony of his speeches, but said, Think not dear Medor, that having long since devoted myself yours, I will now repent me of my enterprize, but rather I beseech you consider, at least, if my prayers may gain acceptance in our amity, that Florina esteems the seal of our nuptials, to be the entrance of her fortunacy, and the uniting of our affections, the very quintessence of her felicity ; therefore I beseech you delay no time, but rather advance thy enterprize ; to the end, that prince Medor receiving the chief solace of his breast, Florina may reciprocally enjoy the desir'd object of her immortal affections.

To which the prince reply'd : ' Wh
then my fair Florina, make ready for th
departure ; to the end that I may inform
my princely associates of our happiness, an
so prosecute our voyage to Cicilia. To C
cilia, said Florina, and the pearled tear
trickled down her vermillion cheeks ; whic
Med

Medor perceiving, desir'd her to let him know the occasion of that sudden passion. To which she reply'd, Since I first heard you repeat the name of Cicilia, my present joys doth afresh put me in mind of my former miseries. For, dear prince, having for thy sake sequestred myself from all company, and built up my residence in a desolate castle; there unexpectedly arriv'd two foreign knights from Cicilia, who in reward of some small favour I afforded them, protested very solemnly to re-search thee out, at least if the confines of Africa did contain thee. Prince Medor reply'd, And have you not since heard of their adventurous proceedings. No, reply'd Florina, which much troubles me, in respect, they were compassionate of my sorrows, and admirers of my affections. Thus with much pleasant discourse they deluded the time, till Florina rush'd out of her cabin, and taking him by the hand, said, Come dear prince, let us depart from hence, and crown our miseries with the triumph of content; fortune you know is variable, therefore let us slip no time, while opportunity doth present; only this I do request of you, that these miserable slaves, who by your conquering valour are made captives, may without prejudice to themselves or goods, have free permission to depart safely.

Prince Medor highly commending her, for projecting so charitable a virtue, very freely thereunto condescended, and so dismissing his prisoners, he commanded his

shallop to be made ready, and with a noise of trumpets chearfully departed; but long he floated not on the surges of Thetis, till a favourable gale re-conducted him safe to his ship, where entering and enquiring for the princes, answer was instantly made him, that they were in the cabin, recreating the ladies with musick; whereupon leaving Florina for a while in another cabin, he went to the princes and ladies, to participate of their exquisite harmony: The which, Thalmeno and Palmo no sooner perceiv'd, but laying their instruments aside, each particularly with his lady, went and congratulated his safe return, asking him the news of his success: To which he reply'd:

Princes and ladies, instead of a rich prize, I have met with an inestimable jewel, the valuation whereof cannot be cast up by the whole industrious science of arithmetick, nor by the noble art of algebra. No, reply'd Athelia and Merilva, why then we believe you have taken all the mint of Mexico, or else ingross'd the minerals of Peru. Indeed ladies, reply'd the prince, that I have not, and yet I divinely rejoyce in possessing so sacred a present.

Whereupon Palmo and Thalmeno reply'd,
 ' Then we believe, Prince Medor, you
 ' have received some information of the
 ' princess Florina, or else seen the resembling idea of her beautiful perfections.'
 The prince hearing the divine name of his
 Florina

Florina repeated, could not refrain producing some smiles; so stepping to the cabin where he had left her, taking her by the hand, he presented her to the whole company; at which Thalmeno and Palmo reflecting their observations upon her angelical beauty, presently conjectured her to be the admired Florina; but not able to ratify their suspected assurance, looking one on the other, durst not adventure to congratulate her by the name of Florina; on the other side Florina fixing the influence of her speculations upon their aspects, immediately judged them to be Thalmeno and Palmo; but at last, after many observations, Thalmeno began to believe that it was absolutely fair Florina; upon which kissing her hand, he thus congratulated her.

‘ Madam, you are thrice welcome to joyful Thalmeno. And millions of thanks to kind fortune, who investing my eyes with the objects of such unexpected happiness!’ Florina hereat colouring her cheeks with a crimson blush, return’d him this answer.

‘ Thanks, noble prince, for your heroic goodness, and more than fortunate am I, to be the essential subject of your favours.’ Prince Palmo here interrupting her, went likewise and kissed her fair hand, and congratulated her; where betwixt those three majesticks of affection, such joyful expressions of friendship was repeated, that Athelia and Mersilva sitting attentively in a

corner, (unseen of Florina) admired what this unlook'd for object was ; for first entertaining some sparks of jealousy, they conjectur'd this beautiful favourite was come on purpose to frustrate their expectations : but instantly ballancing the fidelity of their princes by their own affections, they both thought in point of friendship, and to satisfy their curiosity to advance and congratulate her ; but prince Medor standing at some distance, and conjecturing by the change of their countenances, that their thoughts were in some disorder, interrupted them in this manner.

‘ Fair princesses, to be impartial, this fine lady which is here presented to your eyes, is my admired Florina, whom I honour and adore, as the goddess of my felicity.’ Athelia and Mersilva hearing this, and infusing into their minds the unlook'd for event of this happy accident, demonstrating by their smiling aspects, that their hearts were inwardly filled with joy and gladness, returned him this answer.

‘ Prince Medor, we heartily congratulate you, and do exceedingly rejoice, that the celestial deity hath crown'd all our affections, after our sorrows ; and that fortune hath smiled upon you, in the happy arrival of your divine Florina !’ Whereupon they each of them saluted her, and congratulated her happy welcome. Many affectionate sighs, sweet smiles, and piercing countenances were on each side, with demonstrations

tions of joy for prince Medor's and the lady Florina's happy meeting. And now having finished their congratulations, they wished themselves safely landed upon the shores of Cicilia; the which the master of the ship perceiving, failed not to the utmost of his power to shorten their sea-faring voyage: so that hoisting one more sail, and plowing through the entrails of the sea, they at last in a radiant day very fortunately espied the coasts of Cicilia, which the master perceiving, went immediately and advertised our royal company of this fortunate news; which no sooner was reported to them, but instantly leaving their amorous discourse, they very cheerfully, being desirous of that long wish'd for sight, mounted the upper deck, by which time the wind continually freshing, they were almost approaching the shore; the prospect of which so reviv'd their sickly senses, that prince Thalmeno at last seeing the ship at an anchor, commanded the boatswain to set them on shore.

In which time the three princesses went to their cabinets, and adorn'd themselves in a very rich manner, that they rather resembled celestial nymphs, than human beauties, and sacred queens than terrestrial princesses. The happy hour of their departure being come, hand in hand, like saints of felicity, they rushed forth, presenting themselves to their princes; who attending their arrival, receiv'd them with extraordinary demonstrations of joy: Then generally ta-

king leave of their company, and the shallop being ready, they most gallantly departed; at whose farewell, the master gave such a thundering volley of ordnance, that the rebounding eccho thereof drove the harbouring Cicilians into an affrightment; presupposing that some foreign enemy was come to invade 'em, that in whole troops they directed their course to the sea-side; upon whose obdurate sands with drums beating and colours flying, they attended their landing.

Our princes perceiving this unexpected warlike assembly, could not imagine the occasion of this hostility; but to prevent the worst, they commanded a flag of truce to be demonstrated, and so drew near the shore: Which the Cicilians espying, they desir'd to know of what country they were, and what this unaccustomed alarm meant, and so advanced to prevent their landing. But prince Thalmeno not minding their flourishing bravado, commanded the boatswain to set 'em on shore; which no sooner was effected, but they congratulated their ladies safe arrival, and each taking his lady by the hand, they very courageously went forwards. The Cicilians thought to have had some hot skirmish, but instead thereof, meeting with this weak company, they dragg'd their ensigns with laughter in the dust, which before were display'd in the air. The chief commanders, out of curiosity, desiring to learn what this tragi-comedy meant, advanced

vanced their pace towards our royal company; where glancing their eyes upon the beauty of the ladies, they at last fix'd their eyes upon the princes, and apparently perceived their sovereign young prince Thalmeno, to be there present: At which unexpected sight, they threw away their weapons of war, and went and prostrated themselves at his feet. Which prince Thalmeno perceiving, after having gratified their loyal affectionate humility, with thanks, commanded them to muster up their forces, and so to accompany him, and his princely associates to the palace. Which news was no sooner noised amongst the camp, but they were all ready at their arms, and gallantly march'd forwards; the king by this time was advertised of the welcome news of the prince his son's arrival, and instantly commanded three stately rich coaches to be sent to conduct him, and his royal companions to the court; which was done with such speed, that in a short time they drew near the suburbs of Messina, which being the capital city of Sicilia, was so adorned on both sides the way with rich tapestry hangings on the windows and balconies, cannons and ensigns planted on the bulwark and towers in so pleasant a manner, that their outward pomp was a demonstration of their inward affections.

The king his father being certified of his near approach, accompanied with the queen, and a great concourse of ladies and cava-

liers, very majestically went forth to meet them, where before the port royal he was graciously received, in such a manner, as befitted his royalty; the queen likewise embraced him, and with joyful tears congratulated his welcome. Having ended the ceremony, with their beautiful ladies, they in great magnificence rode on to the city, at whose joyful entrance, the loyal inhabitants caused their pieces of ordnance to be discharged; the streets also, as they passed along, were beautified with many stately pageants; where to demonstrate the citizens voluntary kindness, this royal company was feasted with curious banquets, presented by virgins of excellent beauties: Thus passing the streets in splendour, thro' a lane of warlike young men of the city, they at last arrived to the palace, where a double court of guards, commanded by the chief nobles of the island, most famously received them.

Thalmeno having given the king his father an account of his proceedings, and likewise of the virtuous dispositions of the three angelical ladies, but especially of the princess Athelia: The king willing to try the experiment, whether she were adorn'd with such rare perfections as his son affirm'd, very privately invited her to a secret conference; where entertaining her with sundry intricate questions, as well of wit, as loyalty; love, as modesty; he at last found her so compleatly virtuous, that comparing

her ingenuity with her princely descent, he accounted himself happy to be endued with so gracious a daughter, and his son most fortunate in being blest'd with such a matchless beauty. The queen likewise observ'd her modest deportment, and princely qualities to be so adorn'd with affable demonstratives of goodness, that she thought her not only to be a second Diana for modesty and chastity, but also an excellent Calliope for her ingenious curiosity.

Whereupon she immediately thought that no greater happiness could attend her son, than to be grac'd with so sweet a princess, so that the king and queen both sympathetically triumphing, could not be satisfied, until they had assigned a day to perform their nuptials: which was not long prefixing, for the next festival day was appointed; which heavenly news Thalmeno and Athelia no sooner understood, but with millions of amorous rejoycings they attended the hour wherein their expectations should be crown'd.

But to return to our other princes and ladies, who being informed of prince Thalmeno's fortunate proceedings, wish'd themselves the like enjoyment: which Thalmeno perceiving, measuring their languishing sickness by his own distemper, went immediately to the king his father, and humbly requested that his two princely companions might likewise under his gracious favour,

favour, enjoy their virtuous princesses; which he so authentickly sollicitated, that the king his father to it soon condescended, and that one day should consummate the general triplicity of their marriages.

This news was no sooner related by Thalmeno to Palmo, prince Medor, and the princesses, but being extreamly well pleased, they heartily thank'd him for so great a favour.

While these royal lovers were with pleasant amours, beguiling the time, the king was very diligent in making preparations for their solemnity; and the more to dignify that day with heroical triumphs, he through his whole island, by his herald, commanded a tilt and tournament to be proclaim'd; whereunto not only the nobles of his dominions should be welcome, but also all foreign princes and cavaliers whatsoever, might have free access.

The report thereof was no sooner dispersed through the neighbouring nations, but to Cicilia came in great numbers many valorous troops, of magnanimous martialists, so that at the time appointed, as there wanted not crowds of spectators to behold the triumphs, so there needed not innumerable numbers of cavaliers to satisfy their expectations.

And

And now the joyful day being come, which as the ingenious Cicilians did illustrate with terrestrial bravery, so the gods themselves, in the synod of their resolutions did determine to adorn it with heavenly beauty.

For Aurora had no sooner given the night an overthrow, but splendent Titan began with his golden rays to embellish the day, when the streets being hung with curious tapestry, the pageant, adorned with glistering art, and the streets strewed with pleasant flowers, by many kings, queens, lords and ladies, these, our royal lovers, were most majestically conducted to the temple, where the solemn matrimonial rites were celebrated.

Then turning to the palace, they were with sumptuous feasts, curious dances, and farabands, with stately masks, and variety of musick, so extraordinarily entertained, that the description thereof I cannot sufficiently relate.

The day now being over-veiled with obscure night, summons these our amorous lovers to their bed-chambers; where the doors being shut, we will leave them to their amorous pleasures, and return to the next day, wherein the heroical feats of chivalry were to be accomplished.

The morn was fair, the skies bright,
the wind calm, and Phoebus in his radiant
pavillion, delighted to grace the circum-
ference of the day, with his meridional
beauty.

The tilts being built, the cavaliers ready,
and the herald prepared; let us a while
leave the court, and with valour direct our
history to the camp; wherein a gallery,
theatre-manner, was so industriously built,
that the royal assembly, and beautiful ladies,
might at their ease be spectators, and
in safety sit unprejudic'd of any.

Now to begin with the articles projected
for tilting, it was thus ordained:

‘ That the Cicilians should answer all
comers.’

Whereupon by the king's command, the
herald sounded to the combat; when instantly
a Cicilian knight, gallantly mounted,
entered the list, was presently met by a
warlike Hungarian, who at the first encounter,
lodging his launce in his enemy's breast,
very valorously unhors'd him; to revenge
whose infamy, another Cicilian saluting the
king, fetching his career, galloped within the
lists, which as the first, was by the Hungarian
in a moment vanquished.

The

Royal Flower of Fidelity. 111

The king astonish'd hereat, by his royal page, sent the conqueror a present; and so extolling highly his valour, commanded two fresh champions to be admitted, which instantly was accomplished.

But wavering fortune resolving for a time to smile on the strange cavaliers, did by the instinct of her influence, continually afford them victory; so that of twenty Cicilian champions, which encountered that day, not one remained conqueror, but all to their immortal shame return'd vanquished.

The whole assembly admiring hereat, could not refrain from astonishment; the which the king remarking, instantly commanded the triumphs for that day to break off, and so the general assembly departed.

The rumour of this was noised abroad, and almost in the court no other news, but the vanquishing of the Cicilians.

Our three young princes, Thalmeno, Palmo, and Medor, much incensed to see their associates defeated, animating their breasts with honour, fame and magnanimity; they at last resolved, next morning privately in person, in despite of all the effects of fortune, to maintain the combat.

Upon

Upon which determination, they went to the king's armoury, and chose each of them a sett of very rich armour, imboss'd with fixed stars, and roses of fine gold; and the better to bring about their designs, they under-hand so secretly wrought with the king, that the next morning, to decide the combat, there should be on each side elected three champions, whereof, who-soever remained conqueror, should be invested with the Olympian garland of victory.

Whereupon Aurora no sooner appear'd in the purple sky, but the drums traversing the streets, advertised all, as well natives as foreigners, of the king's intended resolutions.

The Cicilian knights not knowing of the three princes intention, prepared themselves for the combate, and so likewise did the strangers, among whom they elected three magnanimous princes, whose names anon shall be related.

In short, the king, queen, and three princesses, with the rest of the nobility, were again seated in the theatre, burning with desire, to know on which side fortune would incline.

The

The herald no sooner sounded to the combat, but ~~three~~ strange champions entered the list, being gallantly mounted in silver armour, enamelled with azure, their plumes all white and blue, prefiguring hope.

On the contrary part, whilst the Cicians were in dispute, which three should enter, three gallant cavaliers, being Cicians, unexpectedly arrived, very richly mounted upon snow-white Barbarian courfers, apparelled in green armour, their plumes crimson and white, displaying the beauty of their ladies.

The king and company admiring who these unknown Cicians were, commending their valour, and martial dexterity, commanded them for to begin.

The two foremost having paid their obedience, giving spurs to their horses, very valourously advanced; at which furious encounter, they both so gloriously behaved themselves, that it was difficult to censure whose side victory did most favour; but at last, the Cician making a short turn, planting his lance in the enemy's crest, very gallantly bore him off the saddle, to the no little rejoicing of the whole assembly.

The

The second stranger, not any ways discouraged with his companion's misfortune, very courageously set forward, who being by the next Cicilian as bravely met, were both at first very near dismounted; in which triumphant combat, having broken their launces, they retir'd; but no sooner were they furnished by their pages with fresh launces, but giving spurs to their couriers, they again advanced, where the Cicilian so gallantly behaved himself, that at the next encounter, he forc'd both horse and man to the ground with such fury, that the whole assembly thought he had bid a final adieu to the world: Which the third champion perceiving, with an undaunted resolution gave spurs to his jennet; so the last Cicilian knight seeing him approach, with a valourous courage ran to encounter with him; where betwixt these warlike heroical martialists so many acts of chivalry were demonstrated, that the whole assembly gave such expressions of joy, at the viewing so rare a combat, that they were infinitely well pleased.

But to conclude, as the influence of time giveth a full period to all terrestrial accidents, so in the twinkling of an eye, this strange cavalier was by the Cicilian knight most famously vanquished, to the no little rejoycing of the spectators, but also to the satisfaction of the king himself; who for
this

this fortunate victory, came in person to gratify these conquerors with his royal thanks; where, being unarm'd, espying them to be his son Thalmeno, with the other two princes Palmo and Medor, very courteously went and embrac'd 'em, congratulating the conquest of their magnanimities.

The queen likewise being advertis'd of this unexpected news, accompanied with the princesses Athelia, Merfilva, and Florina, together with a numerous train of glistering ladies, came also to congratulate them; and so after many complements, and amorous ceremonies were past, conducted them in a most triumphant manner to the palace, where they were no sooner arriv'd, but burning with desire to know who these vanquish'd knights were, they so far prevail'd with the king, that he presently dispatch'd away a nobleman, to invite them to the court: when instantly the vanquish'd cavaliers, accompanied with many troops of valorous knights, directed their pace to the court, where passing the silver hall and golden gallery, they were conducted into the presence, where the king, queen, and princesses, under a glorious crimson canopy of state, imboss'd with diamonds, attended their arrival; at whose entrance, descending their thrones, they advanc'd to complement them: But our three beautiful princesses
just

just going to complement them, glancing their eyes upon their physiognomy, immediately perceiv'd they were their unexpected natural royal parents : The sudden vision whereof, put them in some disorder ; yet it was so innocent, that it rather was a friend, than an enemy to their beauties : They quickly suppress'd it, and betwixt love and duty, prostrated themselves at their feet, craving pardon : at which amazing accident, the cavaliers, seriously observing their beautiful complexions, found them absolutely, to be their only daughters ; so that natural affection, created tears of ravishing joys from their eyes, being transported beyond measure at this unexpected fortune, they raised them from the ground, and fixing their sight upon each others countenances, they a long time remained silent ; but at last, accumulating their senses in a joyful acclamation, spoke these words :

‘ Welcome, dear daughters, to your
 ‘ sorrowful parents, and millions of thanks
 ‘ to sacred Jehovah, for investing our eyes
 ‘ with these so long desired objects.’

Which the king, with his queen, no sooner heard, but perceiving them to be the happy parents of these virtuous ladies, in a most affectionate manner went and congratulated them, blessing the divine hour, which afforded them the honour of their presence, and rejoycing in their arrivals they were made so fortunate.

The

The three angelical princesses all this while with tears in their eyes, stood trembling, fearing lest their fathers would reprove them for breach of duty : Which their parents perceiving, demanded the occasion of their disconsolateness ; but they dying their complexions with a vermilion blush, stood merely silent : Which king Druino remarking, stept to their fathers, and related to them, that being married without their royal consents, he supposed the discovery of it, they were fearful, would incur their great displeasure : ‘ Married ! ‘ said their fathers ; royal cousin, I beseech ‘ you to whom ? ’ To which king Druino reply’d, ‘ Athelia to prince Thalmeno my ‘ son, and heir apparent to my crown ; ‘ Mersilva to prince Palmo, son to Blith- ‘ gora, king of Egypt ; and Florina to ‘ prince Medor, son to Orlando, king of ‘ Biafara.’

Their royal parents no sooner understood this, but rejoicing in that their daughters were so honourably match’d, they went and most affectionately embraced them.

King Druino seeing them therewith so well satisfied ; moreover told them, That it was those three princes, their sons-in-law, that so valourously had conquer’d them ; which again administer’d so much more joy, that they desired to bless their eyes

eyes with the happy object of their unknown sons personages; which immediately was perform'd: For our heroical young princes, no sooner understood this strange news, but instantly posting to their presence, they very obediently saluted them, imploring pardon for their audacious enterprizes; which, with a gracious reply, was soon granted them; so embracing them in the sight of their daughters, with an affectionate sympathy, they, in publick view, generally ratified that which before was solemnly celebrated.

King Druino perceiving this unexpected heroical meeting, remarking how their sweet martialists of affection were with their sweet princesses happily united, failed not, in the most triumphant order, to embellish this royal assembly with extraordinary grandeur: So as banquetting these foreign kings with such princely entertainment, as was equivalent to their royal persons, he a long time retained them in the Cicilian kingdom, to the no less joy of his faithful subjects, than admiration of all foreign spectators; many days were expir'd in solemnizing these triumphs, the honour whereof mounting the skies, will till eternity, redound to the Cicilian fame.

The three renowned kings seeing it now high time to draw homewards, because they knew the publick affairs of their kingdoms

doms required their presence, prepared themselves to depart; and so gratifying King Druino for their royal entertainment, and taking their gracious leave of the queen and nobility of Cicilia, they at last with their princely sons and daughters, embarked themselves; when a favourable gale blowing them from the Cicilian coast, did most pleasantly re-conduct them in safety to their own kingdoms: So as Thalmeno being with his fair Athelia arrived in the territories of Zanfara; Palmo, with his sweet Merfilva, in the country of Bohemia; and Medor, with his dear Florina, in the confines of Numidia, they all happily there lived in the height of most amorous affection; till at last, death summoned their aged parents to pay nature her due; and being deprived from the vanity of this earthly kingdom, to be invested saints in the celestial monarchy, our young princes were in their stead most triumphantly crown'd, where living in great tranquillity, they a long time reigned, to the joy of their subjects, and their own hearts content.



The E N D.

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